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Volume 2

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILLOR

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CHAPTER V

Attitudes towards some possible changes in work and procedures

The report so far has examined some aspects of the present work of councils and recorded how councillors feel about them. At present, when the possible reorganisation of local government is so much discussed, alternative methods of procedure are being canvassed for almost every part of council work. Some of these proposals involve radical change, and opinion on them will develop only as experience of their working accumulates. In the introduction we have described the way this survey was devised and the selection of topics for investigation. It is only necessary to say here that we have not asked councillors about possible major reorganisations of their work. Rather we have studied their current experience and reactions to it in the belief that any changes which are made will work better to the extent that experience of the present system is taken into account; and that the opinions of the present-day councillors on their current experience are relevant to decisions on what changes are desirable. Aside from major reorganisation, there are many, more limited, issues which affect the recruitment and work of councillors and which relate very closely to current experience. Opinion on some of these issues is described below.

Do Councils do enough now?

How adequate do councillors feel are their present efforts? We have already shown that many councillors feel that they personally are not able to 'spend as much time on all aspects of council work as they think is necessary' and that because of this some such aspects do not get enough attention. But these feelings of personal ineffectiveness on particular subjects accompany the conviction that their councils have done a great deal in the same fields. We asked all councillors: 'Is enough being done by the council to help people and improve things?' While a majority of all councillors thought that enough was being done, 45% said that more needed to be done. The feeling for more action was strongest in the county boroughs and the former metropolitan boroughs (Table 5.1).

The younger councillors were more likely than older ones to feel that 'more should be done' and, as perhaps is to be expected, more members of the main opposition group than of the majority group in council. We have shown elsewhere that those councillors who feel that they cannot find enough time to do justice to all aspects of council work in fact spend more time on it than those who are more satisfied with their efforts. It is consistent with this to find as well that those who do not feel that they can now find enough time are *more likely* than other councillors to feel that 'more should be done' by councils.

This is the reaction of the 'activists' among councillors in all types of authority and the feeling for more action in particular types of council is not

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directly related to the average time spent by all councillors in that type. While county borough councillors, who spend most time on their public activities, are also more likely than others to feel that even more should be done, county councillors are much less likely to feel this and the metropolitan borough councillors who spent least time were nearly as keen as the county borough councillors to do more.

TABLE 5.1

'Is enough being done by council to help people and improve things in this area or should more be done?'
—by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metro- politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
Enough	% 54	% 53	% 37	% 39	% 48	% 67
More	34	32	46	52	37	24
Enough in some ways more should be done in others ..	11	13	17	9	12	8
Don't know	—	1	—	—	1	—
Not answered	1	1	—	—	2	1
Total (Numbers)	100 (1,235)	100 (152)	100 (134)	100 (46)	100 (483)	100 (420)
Average monthly time spent on all council work (in hrs.) ..	52	68 (2)	77 (1)	46 (4)	56 (3)	34 (5)

All councillors were asked if they could mention 'any one particular problem' in their areas which they thought might require a great deal of attention in the near future. Taking all councillors together planning and housing were most frequently mentioned as areas needing attention (Table 5.2). Very few councillors mentioned local government reorganisation in answer to this question, but it may be that this is considered to be a problem having a wider bearing than that of any particular council.

The problems mentioned in reply to this question varied very much from one type of council to another. Education was much more prominent amongst the answers given by county councillors, and housing and slum clearance were the outstanding problems in the minds of metropolitan borough councillors. It is of interest that a smaller proportion of metropolitan borough councillors than others gave prominence to planning and development. Amongst the rural district councillors basic improvements, such as those connected with the sewerage or water supply, take a leading place alongside housing and development. A substantial proportion of councillors did not feel able to select any one problem, or drew attention to a very wide variety of miscellaneous problems.

Attitudes towards some possible changes in work and procedures

TABLE 5.2

'Is there any particular problem which you think will require a great deal of attention by the council in the next year or so?'—by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metro-politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
Town planning/development ..	% 22	% 11	% 19	% 9	% 26	% 22
Housing/slum clearance ..	21	7	26	65	20	
Traffic schemes/road improvements ..	13	23	23	2	14	5
Public utilities ..	11	1	2	—	7	23
Education/further education ..	5	22	13	—	2	—
Establishment of new industry ..	4	5	1	—	5	4
Boundary revision problems ..	3	3	3	—	4	1
Amenities ..	2	1	2	—	4	1
Local government reorganisation ..	2	3	1	2	2	3
Old people's welfare ..	2	3	3	4	1	3
Other answers/don't know ..	15	20	7	18	14	16
Not answered ..	—	1	—	—	1	—
Total .. (Numbers)	100 (1,235)	100 (152)	100 (134)	100 (46)	100 (483)	100 (420)

The following table shows that there were some differences between the age groups on this question.

TABLE 5.3

'Is there any particular problem which you think will require a great deal of attention by the council in the next year or so?'—by age

	Total	Age		
		Under 45	45-64	65 and over
Amenities, town planning/development ..	% 24	% 31	% 23	% 21
Housing, slum clearance, public utilities ..	32	27	42	31
Traffic schemes/road improvements/old people's welfare ..	15	11	13	21
Local government reorganisation/boundary revision problems ..	5	8	3	6

How could more time be found?

If more is to be done by councillors either more time must be found or more must be done in the present time. We asked councillors which of these alternatives seemed to offer the best prospects.

TABLE 5.4
 'How could more time be found for council work?'—
 by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metro-politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
By changing procedures	%	%	%	%	%	%
By increasing total time	20	19	29	24	25	10
More time not needed ..	71	71	63	67	67	79
Don't know	1	—	2	—	2	1
Not answered	7	9	4	9	4	9
Total (Numbers)	100 (1,235)	100 (152)	100 (134)	100 (46)	100 (483)	100 (420)

A large majority of councillors thought that more time would be needed and in all types of council under 30%, felt that time could be found by changing existing procedures. It is interesting to note that it is in those types of council with the strongest feeling that more effort is needed that we find more councillors believing that the extra time could be found by changing existing procedures.

	Total	Counties	County boroughs	Metro-politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
More should be done ..	%	%	%	%	%	%
Time can be found by changing procedures ..	45	45	63	61	49	32
	20	19	29	24	26	10

The younger councillors and those with further education were more likely than others to believe that time could be found by changing present procedures. The employers and managers in the larger businesses and professionals as well as the non-manual non-professional workers were more likely than others to believe in the possibility of changing existing procedures.

We went on to explore in two different ways just what changes in procedure councillors thought most likely to yield the needed extra time. Firstly, we asked those (20% of all councillors only) who thought time could be found by changing procedures in what way they thought procedures could be changed; and, secondly, we put to *all councillors* three of the methods of saving councillors' time which have been suggested frequently in the current reorganisation debate. When we asked the minority in what way they thought procedures could be changed their answers showed that they were thinking mainly of changes in the organisation and work of committees. Over half of the answers referred to 'altering existing committee structure' or 'reducing the size of committees' 'changing the times' of committees. Such responses came from about 10% of all councillors. They may be called the unprompted proposals for changes in

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the committee system. Much smaller proportions spoke of the 'delegation of authority to officials' or 'streamlining office routine'. Together such responses came from perhaps 4 or 5% of all councillors. A very small group, perhaps less than 2% of all councillors, talked of 'eliminating irrelevant speeches' or questions.

The more direct questions produced a rather different picture. It will be seen that rather more councillors accept the possibility of procedural changes when they are directly asked about them.

Table 5.5 shows that on some proposals over 40% of councillors on some types of council gave a positive response. In the county boroughs and metropolitan boroughs about a quarter of all councillors felt that more time could be found 'by spending less time on party debate'. It is these councils which perhaps more than any other are organised on party political lines. In rural districts where a very large proportion of all councillors were returned unopposed only a tiny proportion of councillors agreed with this proposition. Because of the weight of county and rural district councillors in the total, only a small minority of all councillors say that time could be made available by reducing party debate.

More than twice as many thought that more time could be found 'if each councillor sat on fewer committees'. The metropolitan borough councillors were more likely to say this. They actually sat on fewer committees than any other councillors except those in rural districts. When answering the question, of course, they knew that their existing borough organisation was about to disappear and that something much closer to an all-purpose county borough would take its place. It is likely that these responses were made in anticipation of this change. But even apart from them nearly a third of all other councillors, except the rural district councillors, felt that reducing the number of committees was a feasible method of providing more time for council activities.

The largest proportion of positive response (one-third of all councillors) was made to the proposition that time could be found by leaving more detailed work to officials. Forty-three per cent agreed to this amongst councillors in county boroughs and municipal boroughs and urban districts. It is interesting that on this issue relatively fewer of the metropolitan district councillors than councillors in the other urban authorities agreed with the proposition.

TABLE 5.5

'Could more time be found without seriously harming the council's work in any of the following ways?'
—by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metro- politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
	%	%	%	%	%	%
More time could be found by:						
Spending less time on party debate	13	11	24	28	17	3
If each councillor sat on fewer committees	27	31	32	39	31	19
Leaving more detailed work to officials	33	24	43	26	43	22

These responses to direct questions show that there was a much greater willingness to consider change in the way councils organise their business than appeared when councillors were asked to reply to a general proposition on the possibility of change. That is to say, whilst the overall sentiment was conservative and heavily against change, on concrete proposals for particular changes there was a much greater positive response. And it should be remembered that where, as amongst younger councillors or in the county boroughs, the feeling for councils to 'do more to help people and improve things' was strongest there the willingness to consider changes in procedure was greatest. Experience shows that on many changes in governmental procedures in Britain opinion has changed after they have come about. The present level of feeling on the issues examined, then, cannot be regarded as predicting what the attitude on such matters will be after changes have been made.

Payment for Council work

All councillors were asked a series of questions related to possible changes in the present system of payments for time or expenses. Table 5.6 shows the present position. Very few councillors now claim for stationery or telephone expenses or loss of pay. Nearly a quarter of county borough councillors, however, now claim 'always' or 'sometimes' for loss of pay. Rather more councillors claim now for subsistence, and in the county boroughs and county councils substantial proportions always claim for subsistence. As might be expected a much higher proportion of county councillors are now claiming travelling expenses, since the journeys involved in attending council meetings are obviously much more time-consuming and expensive than those involved in the work of other kinds of council, but 40% of county borough councillors also always claim for travelling expenses.

TABLE 5.6
'Do you claim for payment for the following items?'—
by council type

Claim for:	All	Counties	County	Metro-	Municipal	Rural
	councils		boroughs	politan	boroughs &	districts
Loss of pay always	7	9	19	7	9	1
Loss of pay sometimes	4	2	5	7	6	1
Subsistence always	19	43	42	15	16	7
Subsistence sometimes	13	16	17	11	16	7
Travelling expenses always	29	72	40	13	18	24
Travelling expenses sometimes	18	8	19	28	27	9
Stationery, telephone always	2	2	6	4	1	1
Stationery, telephone sometimes	1	—	5	2	1	1
(Numbers) ..	(1,235)	(152)	(134)	(46)	(483)	(420)

Following on these questions, councillors were asked what they thought about the present levels of allowances. The answers are given in Table 5.7. It will be seen that in general a substantial majority of councillors think that

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the present allowances are adequate, although there are substantial differences between the amount of approval given by different types of councillors. Thus while about 25% of all councillors think that allowances for loss of pay should be increased and another 5% believe that they are not now eligible but would like to be, 50% of county borough councillors would like to see them increased. This is a much higher proportion than amongst other councillors. Similarly, it is the county borough councillors who are more likely than others to think that subsistence allowances should be increased.

In connection with allowances for stationery and telephones, considerable numbers of councillors now believe that they are not now eligible but should be eligible. The proportion taking this attitude rose to 37% of metropolitan borough councillors. It is necessary to add the two lines 'should be increased' and 'not now eligible but should be' together to get the full measure of those who want changes from the present situation. Over 40% of county borough councillors would like to see changes in their present situation regarding allowances for stationery and telephones.

TABLE 5.7

(a) 'Would you say allowances for loss of pay are adequate?'—
by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metro- politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
Adequate	% 59	% 44	% 39	% 54	% 58	% 72
Should be increased	25	28	45	30	27	14
Not now eligible—but should be	5	5	5	4	5	6
Not answered	11	23	11	12	10	8
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

(b) 'Would you say allowances for subsistence are adequate?'

	%	%	%	%	%	%
Adequate	68	59	48	50	71	77
Should be increased	20	27	44	37	19	10
Not now eligible—but should be	4	3	2	7	3	6
Not answered	8	11	6	6	7	7
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

(c) 'Would you say allowances for travelling expenses are adequate?'

	%	%	%	%	%	%
Adequate	79	68	70	70	81	85
Should be increased	12	20	19	17	10	8
Not now eligible—but should be	3	1	4	7	1	4
Not answered	6	11	7	6	8	3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

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(d) 'Would you say allowances for stationery, telephone are adequate?'

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metro-politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
Adequate	% 64	% 36	% 46	% 46	% 67	% 79
Should be increased	6	9	13	7	5	5
Not now eligible—but should be	15	24	28	37	12	8
Not answered	15	31	13	10	16	8
Total	100 (Numbers for above 4 tables)	100 (1,235)	100 (152)	100 (134)	100 (46)	100 (483)
						100 (420)

Perhaps the most controversial issue in connection with payment is that of payment for being a councillor. Table 5.8 shows how councillors feel about this issue. Two-thirds of all councillors *do not* think that councillors should be paid and there is a clear majority holding this view in all types of councils. The proportion thinking councillors should not be paid is highest in the municipal boroughs and urban districts and somewhat lower in the counties and metropolitan boroughs. There is a division amongst those who think that councillors should be paid, 19% thinking that payment should be made to all councillors and 14% to some only. Amongst those thinking that payment should be made to some councillors only, about half have in mind payment to the Chairmen of Councils or of Committees. Thus while 19% of all informants think that all councillors should be paid, about 7% in addition to this think that Council Chairmen or Chairmen of Committees should be paid. A further quarter of those thinking that some councillors only should be paid (or between 3-4% of all councillors) appeared to think that only those councillors should be paid who were 'in need of payment'.

It is of interest to note that the proportion of *councillors* thinking that councillors should be paid (33%) is very similar to the proportion of electors thinking this (31%) which is shown in the Electors' report.

TABLE 5.8
'Should councillors be paid?'—by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metro-politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
None should be paid	% 66	% 58	% 65	% 39	% 70	% 65
Some should be paid:	14	14	20	15	12	15
Council or Committee Chairman	(7)	(7)	(13)	(9)	(6)	(8)
Those in need of payment	(3)	(5)	(2)	(2)	(4)	(4)
Other answers/not answered	(4)	(4)	(7)	(4)	(3)	(5)
All should be paid	19	26	13	24	16	20
Don't know/not answered	1	2	2	2	2	—
Total	100 (Numbers)	100 (1,235)	100 (152)	100 (134)	100 (46)	100 (483)
						100 (420)

(Bracketed percentages add to more than the total of 'Some should be paid' because some informants gave more than one answer.)

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We asked informants to say why they thought councillors should or should not be paid. The largest group of those believing that payment should be made to either all or some councillors thought that payment should be a means of compensation 'for time spent' or to 'allow more time to be spent' (Table 5.9). Another major reason for urging payment was 'to cover expenses'. The feeling that some compensation for time lost was needed was greatest amongst the rural district councillors. It will be remembered that rural district councillors themselves spend less time on council work than others. Only about 11% of those believing that all councillors or some councillors should be paid thought that this would help to attract 'good or better qualified people' (Table 5.10). This amounts to only 3-4% of the whole sample of councillors.

For those thinking that councillors should not be paid, the main reasons given were the importance of maintaining the voluntary tradition or that payment would 'attract the wrong kind of person'. Nearly a half of those thinking that councillors should not be paid (or about one-third of all councillors in the sample) gave one of these reasons for not paying councillors. These sentiments are felt to very much the same degree by most types of councillor.

TABLE 5.9
'Why should councillors be paid?'—
by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metro- politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
	%	%	%	No.	%	%
To compensate for time spent/ allow more time to be spent .. .	40	40	39	(10)	24	56
To cover all expenses .. .	20	31	22	(1)	20	16
To attract those who otherwise could not afford it .. .	15	22	7	—	10	22
It should be a full-time job .. .	13	18	32	(6)	10	6
To attract good/better qualified people .. .	11	22	10	(1)	12	6
Other answers .. .	29	20	39	(5)	27	31
Total .. .	128	153	149		103	137
(Numbers believing councillors should be paid) .. .	(376)	(45)	(41)	(15)	(147)	(128)
Average monthly time spent as a councillor (in hrs.) .. .	52	68	77	46	56	34

(Percentages add up to more than 100 as some informants gave more than one answer.)

TABLE 5.10
 'Why should councillors not be paid?'—
 by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metro-politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
	%	%	%	No.	%	%
Should maintain voluntary tradition	54	49	52	(15)	54	56
Would attract wrong kind of person	48	40	50	(14)	66	31
Rates would go up	4	—	—	—	—	12
Not if loss of pay given	3	4	6	—	4	1
Other answers	19	16	22	(13)	17	19
Total	128	109	130		141	119
(Numbers believing councillors should not be paid)	(799)	(96)	(88)	(32)	(311)	(272)

(Percentages add up to more than 100 as some informants gave more than one answer.)

How much should councillors be paid?

Those who said all or some councillors should be paid were asked how much the payment should be. Responses were analysed in two ways—the period covered by the payment, and the amount. One-third of those thinking that payment should be made suggested a loss of earnings basis or an unspecified period, just under one-third suggested a yearly basis and the remainder gave periods varying from an hour to a month.

Basis of suggested payment for councillors

		%
per meeting	.. .. .. .. ..	14
per hour	.. .. .. .. ..	5
per week	.. .. .. .. ..	6
per month	.. .. .. .. ..	1
per year	.. .. .. .. ..	30
Other basis (loss of earnings or not specified)	.. ..	33
Not answered	.. .. .. .. ..	11
		100
(Those thinking payment should be made)		(413)

In the table below, column (a) shows the distribution of amounts suggested by those who said councillors should be paid by the year. Just over a half thought the sum should exceed £250. Column (b) shows the amounts given by those suggesting some other period of payment, but converted to a yearly

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basis assuming that six meetings equal one month, two hours each meeting, and pro rata. These calculations are based on survey findings, with the reservation that some of our informants may have had in mind a different yearly equivalent of meetings or hours. Column (c) is the result of adding together the last two columns, and gives a yearly equivalent of all amounts suggested by our informants.

£ per year	(a) Amount (those stating 'per year' only)	(b) Amount (those stating periods other than a year)	(c) Amount (those stating any period)
	%	%	%
Up to 50	20	—	10
51-250	27	45	36
Over 250	53	55	54
Total ..	100	100	100
(Numbers thinking payment should be made)	(124)	(107)	(231)

It must be emphasised that these suggestions for the manner and amount of payment come only from those councillors who definitely thought that payments to councillors were needed. On this survey they were only one-third of all informants. If we take these questions on payment together it seems clear that feeling runs highest on this subject amongst county borough councillors and lowest amongst rural district councillors.

Co-option

Councillors were asked to express their opinions on co-option. The answers to this question are displayed in Table 5.11. It is clear that there are very mixed feelings about co-option. Favourable feelings were expressed most frequently in the counties while in the municipal boroughs and urban districts and rural districts larger than average proportions were against co-option. For those in favour of co-option amongst all types of councillors the main reason was that it made available specialised knowledge and the services of people who otherwise would not participate. The main reasons against co-option were that it breached the democratic order (Table 5.12). More than half of those against co-option made such remarks as 'it's undemocratic' or 'they have not been chosen by the electorate'. But a substantial proportion of those against co-option (roughly 5-6% of the total sample) thought 'co-option tends to be on partisan lines'. Some of those against co-option felt that co-opted members 'do not have enough knowledge of the underlying problems' or could not spare enough time for really effective participation in council work.

Older councillors and those with only elementary or secondary education were less likely to express unfavourable attitudes towards co-option than others.

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TABLE 5.11
Attitudes towards co-option—by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metropolitan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
In favour	% 38	% 56	% 47	% 50	% 38	% 28
Against	32	17	23	15	38	35
Mixed feelings	22	24	27	26	20	22
Don't know	6	2	2	7	2	14
Not answered	2	1	1	2	2	1
Total (Numbers)	100 (1,235)	100 (152)	100 (134)	100 (46)	100 (483)	100 (420)

TABLE 5.12
Main reasons against co-option—by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metropolitan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
Undemocratic/person has not been chosen by electorate ..	% 54	% 43	% 52	No. (4)	% 57	% 57
Co-option tends to be on partisan lines	21	25	17	(4)	24	17
Co-opted members don't have knowledge of underlying problem	7	9	10	—	8	4
Co-opted members don't have enough time	4	7	7	(1)	5	2
Existing council can cope/co-option unnecessary	8	2	3	(1)	5	16
Extent of co-option should be severely limited	6	14	11	(5)	1	4
Total (Numbers against co-option)	100 (593)	100 (56)	100 (60)	(15)	100 (258)	100 (204)

Mayors, chairmen and aldermen

The issues discussed so far in this chapter are concerned with aspects of the efficiency of councils. It is often suggested, however, that the ceremonial features of councils are of importance not only because they add to their status and public esteem but also because they assist their work. We asked councillors to give their opinions on two positions to which status is attached—the Mayor and the Alderman.

Table 5.13 shows how councillors felt about the position of mayor. Two-thirds do not believe that the public standing of councils is affected by the institution of mayor but over 40% of county borough and metropolitan borough

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councillors do. The younger councillors and the managers or employers in larger firms and professionals were more likely than others to believe that the institution *did* affect the public standing of councils. Only a tiny proportion of all councillors (4%), however, felt that the position had any effect at all on willingness to stand for council (Table 5.14).

TABLE 5.13

'Does the fact that some authorities have chairmen instead of mayors affect the public standing of such councils?'—by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metro- politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
Yes	% 27	% 20	% 42	% 42	% 33	% 17
No	67	77	51	52	62	74
Don't know	3	1	5	2	4	7
Not answered	3	2	2	4	1	2
Total (Numbers)	100 (1,235)	100 (152)	100 (134)	100 (46)	100 (483)	100 (420)

TABLE 5.14

'Does the fact that some authorities have chairmen instead of mayors affect the willingness of suitable candidates to stand?'—by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metro- politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
Yes	% 4	% 5	% 5	% 9	% 6	% 1
No	92	93	89	85	92	94
Don't know	3	1	4	6	1	4
Not answered	1	1	2	—	1	1
Total (Numbers)	100 (1,235)	100 (152)	100 (134)	100 (46)	100 (483)	100 (420)

Table 5.15 shows how councillors felt about the position of aldermen. Rather fewer felt that the existence of aldermen affected the *public standing* of councils than felt this way about the position of mayor. The proportion is rather higher if one excludes the opinions of councillors in areas without aldermen, and in the county councils as many as 20% feel that the institution had an effect on the standing of councils. Once again it is the councillors who are employers and managers in the large firms and the professionals who are more likely to think the institution important. Seventy-two per cent of all aldermen said that they did *not* think the existence of their own special position

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affected the public standing of councils. Very few councillors thought that the position had any effect on willingness to stand for the council (Table 5.16).

Contradictory reasons were advanced by a very small minority (6%) which believed that aldermanic status affects the supply of candidates. Most of these councillors think that the absence of such status would put off those who are attracted by the prestige of the title or that those who do not want to fight elections will, in the absence of aldermanic status, not want to participate. On the other hand, some of this same minority believed that the absence of the 'undemocratic system of appointing aldermen' would make more people willing to stand for council office.

Nineteen per cent of all councillors, however, did think that the position of aldermen affected the work of councils and the proportion rose to 41% amongst county councillors (Table 5.17). If one excludes the opinions of those authorities

TABLE 5.15

'Does the fact that some authorities do not have aldermen affect the public standing of councils?'—by council type

	All councils	All councils excluding municipal boroughs, urban & rural districts	Counties	County boroughs	Metropolitan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
Yes	% 11	% 16	% 20	% 15	% 7	% 13	% 4
No	84	80	74	80	93	84	88
Don't know	4	3	4	4	—	2	6
Not answered	1	1	2	1	—	1	2
Total (Numbers) ..	100 (1,235)	100 (332)	100 (152)	100 (134)	100 (46)	100 (483)	100 (420)

TABLE 5.16

'Does the fact that some authorities do not have aldermen affect the willingness of suitable candidates to stand for election?'—by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metropolitan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
Yes	% 6	% 13	% 7	% —	% 4	% 1
No	90	83	90	94	92	94
Don't know	3	2	2	2	3	4
Not answered	1	2	1	4	1	1
Total (Numbers)	100 (1,235)	100 (152)	100 (134)	100 (46)	100 (483)	100 (420)

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which do not have aldermen it will be seen that over a third of councillors in the areas which do have aldermen believe that their presence does affect the work of councils. Nevertheless, 57% of all aldermen did not think that the existence of their special position affected the work of councils.

The largest groups of reasons given for believing that the work would be affected are summarised in the comments 'They have invaluable experience' or 'It makes for continuity in council work'.

If all these opinions are taken together, the majority view of councillors seems to be that these positions are not of great importance for the public standing of councils and that they play an insignificant role in the recruitment of councillors. This view is endorsed by aldermen themselves. Amongst county councillors, however, rather greater weight is attached to the contribution of aldermen to the work of councils.

TABLE 5.17

'Does the fact that some authorities do not have aldermen affect the work of such councils?'

(a) By council type

	All councils	All councils excluding municipal boroughs, urban & rural districts	Counties	County boroughs	Metropolitan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
Yes	% 19	% 36	% 41	% 32	% 31	% 17	% 6
No	% 77	% 61	% 56	% 66	% 67	% 78	% 87
Don't know	% 3	% 1	% 1	% 1	—	% 4	% 5
Not answered	% 1	% 2	% 2	% 1	% 2	% 1	% 2
Total (Numbers) ..	100 (1,235)	100 (332)	100 (152)	100 (134)	100 (46)	100 (483)	100 (420)

(b) By status on council

	Total	Unopposed councillor	Opposed councillor	Alderman
Yes	% 19	% 13	% 18	% 38
No	% 77	% 83	% 78	% 57
Don't know	% 3	% 3	% 3	% 5
Not answered	% 1	% 1	% 1	—
Total (Numbers)	100 (1,235)	100 (450)	100 (620)	100 (127)

(The total of 1,235 includes 38 informants who did not give their status on council.)

Limitations on length of service

All councillors were asked a series of questions about possible limitations on length of service. Answers to these questions are displayed in Tables 5.18-20.

Retiring age

About half of all councillors think that there should be a compulsory retiring age for council members. The proportions are very much the same amongst all types of councillors. Councillors in all types of authority who think there should be a retiring age have similar ideas on what the retiring age should be.

Thirteen per cent of all councillors think the retiring age should be 65 or under. About one-third of all councillors think that the age should be 70 or over. Just under half of all councillors, on the other hand, *do not* think there should be a retiring age (Table 5.18).

It was the middle-aged groups (45-64) who were more likely than others to feel that a retiring age was necessary. The views of the younger group of councillors (under 45) were very near the average.

TABLE 5.18
'Should there be a compulsory retiring age for council members?'—by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metropoli- tan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
Compulsory retiring age?	%	%	%	%	%	%
NO	46	48	42	44	49	44
YES	50	46	54	54	48	51
Up to 65	(13)	(7)	(9)	(20)	(15)	(14)
66-69	(2)	(2)	(2)	(—)	(3)	(2)
70	(19)	(15)	(17)	(30)	(19)	(19)
Over 70	(13)	(17)	(23)	(2)	(8)	(14)
Age not specified/ not answered	(3)	(5)	(3)	(2)	(3)	(2)
Don't know/ not answered	4	6	4	2	3	5
Total ..	100	100	100	100	100	100

Limiting service as chairman

Three-quarters of all councillors felt that there should be a limit to the time individuals might serve as mayors or chairmen of councils (Table 5.19). Twenty-eight per cent of all councillors thought that this limit should be one year or less. Thirty-seven per cent of all councillors thought that the limit should be between one to three years. County borough councillors were more likely than others to suggest a limit of one year or less, while rural district councillors were on the whole inclined to suggest rather longer limits.

Rather fewer, but nevertheless still a majority, of all councillors thought that there should be a limit to the time any individual might serve as a chairman

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of any one committee (Table 5.20). Ten per cent of all councillors thought that the limit should be one year or less; 25% of them thought that the limit should be between one and three years; and 18% of them thought that it should be more than three years.

TABLE 5.19

‘Should there be a limit to the length of time any individual may serve as mayor or chairman of the council?’—by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metro- politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
Time limit for Mayor/Chairman?	%	%	%	%	%	%
NO	21	27	16	24	13	29
YES .. .	76	68	81	76	84	70
Up to one year	(28)	(18)	(55)	(48)	(38)	(11)
Over 1 to 3 years	(37)	(34)	(23)	(26)	(41)	(41)
Over 3 years ..	(8)	(11)	(1)	(—)	(3)	(16)
Not specified/ not answered	(3)	(5)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(2)
Don't know/ not answered	3	5	3	—	3	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

TABLE 5.20

‘Should there be a limit to the length of time an individual may serve as
Chairman of the same Committee?’—by council type

	All Councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metro- politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
Time limit for Committee Chairman ?	%	%	%	%	%	%
NO	41	43	49	37	40	40
YES	55	53	46	61	56	57
Up to one year	(10)	(3)	(5)	(4)	(10)	(13)
Over 1-3 years..	(25)	(21)	(19)	(46)	(32)	(21)
Over 3 years ..	(18)	(27)	(19)	(11)	(12)	(20)
Not specified/ not answered	(2)	(2)	(3)	(—)	(2)	(3)
Don't know/ not answered	4	4	5	2	4	3
Total .. .	100	100	100	100	100	100
(Numbers for above 3 tables) .. .	(1,235)	(152)	(134)	(46)	(483)	(420)

Summary of Chapter V

1. Whilst a majority of all councillors felt that councils were now doing enough for people 45% of all, and over 60% of county borough and metropolitan borough councillors thought that more should be done. The leading problems which it was thought would require a great deal of attention were Town Planning, Housing, Traffic Schemes and Public Utilities.
2. If more was to be done by councils how could time be found for it? Most councillors thought it would mean extra time, but 20% thought time could be found by changing existing procedures, and rather more councillors thought that some specific proposals for change could provide the extra time needed. For example, 33% of all councillors and 43% of county borough councillors thought that time could be found if more detailed work were left to officials.
3. Attitudes towards change may be summarised as follows:

TABLE 5.21
Index of attitude towards changes in council work —
by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metro- politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs and urban districts	Rural districts
	%	%	%	%	%	%
More time could be found for council work by changing procedures ..	20	19(4)	29(1)	24(3)	26(2)	10(5)
More time could be found by spending less time on party debate ..	13	11(4)	24(2)	28(1)	17(3)	3(5)
More time could be found by leaving more detailed work to officials ..	33	24(4)	43(1=)	26(3)	43(1=)	22(5)
More time could be found if each councillor sat on fewer committees ..	27	31(3=)	32(2)	39(1)	31(3=)	19(5)
More should be done by council to help people and improve things in area ..	34	32(4)	46(2)	52(1)	37(3)	24(5)
Index of attitude towards changes in council work ..	127	117(4)	174(1)	169(2)	154(3)	78(5)

If these figures are accepted as valid indications of the interest in change, then it appears that the feeling for change in procedures and activity of councils is highest in the county boroughs and lowest in the rural districts. The responses to the other issues examined in this chapter involving change are more mixed.

These were mainly concerned with limitations on the period of service in various capacities. On balance county councillors were probably more against change on these issues than were other councillors.

4. The chapter examines councillors' opinions on the present system of payment for loss of earnings, subsistence, travelling and stationery. In general a substantial majority of present councillors thought such payments were adequate, but on some of these points substantial numbers of councillors thought changes were needed. For example, half of all county borough councillors would like to see allowances for loss of earnings increased.

5. Two-thirds of all informants did not think that councillors should be paid for being councillors. But 40% of county councillors thought that all or some should be paid. Only about 3-4% of all councillors thought that such payments would help to attract 'good or better qualified people'. In contrast to this, half of those who were *against* payment, or about one-third of all councillors, thought it would 'attract the wrong kind of person'.

6. The majority of councillors did not feel that the absence of the title 'mayor' in some activities affected either the public standing of the councils or the willingness of people to stand for office. Neither did they feel that the position of alderman had much effect on either the standing of councils or their work, or the willingness of people to stand. These views were shared by aldermen.

7. About half of all councillors thought there should be a retiring age for councillors and three-quarters thought there should be a limit to the time people could be chairmen of council or mayor. A majority thought there should be a limit to the time any individual might be chairman of any one committee.

CHAPTER VI

Councillors and other organisations

Somewhere between 20 and 25% of councillors' *public* time is spent with organisations other than the council, its committees and institutions. Part of this time is spent representing the council and part on the councillor's own behalf, though still regarded by him as part of his council work. But beyond these activities councillors also spend time on other organisations as part of their individual interests. All these official and non-official activities taken together are the councillor's links with many sides of social life and one of the main means whereby his ability to represent, express, and shape public opinion is sustained. It therefore seemed relevant to our enquiry to find out something about the councillor's connections with other organisations.

How many Organisations do Councillors belong to?

We asked all councillors to tell us which organisations they belonged to 'at the present time'. Table 6.1 gives the results of this question and of a similar question put to electors.

TABLE 6.1
Total membership of organisations of various kinds
(All councillors)

	All organisations		Political organisations		Public bodies or committees		Work* organisations		Other† organisations
	Cls. %	Els. %	Cls. %	Els. %	Cls. %	Els. %	Cls. %	Els. %	Cls. %
Number of memberships:									
0 ..	..	..	1	39	31	92	30	99	66
1 ..	..	..	5	27	62	—	25	26	—
2-3 ..	..	..	15	25	1	—	26	2	—
4-6 ..	..	..	32	—	—	8	11	1	—
7 or more ..	..	..	41	—	—	—	2	—	—
Not answered ..	..	..	6	—	6	—	6	—	6
Total (Numbers of councillors) ..	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
(Numbers of electors) ..	(1,235)		(1,235)		(1,235)		(1,235)		(1,235)
Average number of memberships ..	6.6	1.3	0.6		1.8		0.3		3.9

*I.e. trade unions and professional associations.

†E.g. religious, welfare, community, leisure organisations.

Councillors and other organisations

On average councillors belong to between six and seven organisations and very many councillors belong to seven or more. Obviously the range of contacts of councillors is of a completely different order from that of electors. Amongst electors men belong to more organisations than women, but even if we reweight the electors' figures so as to give the same ratio of men to women as is found amongst councillors, the distributions remain very different:

Number of organisations	Electors	Electors reweighted	Councillors*
	%	%	%
0	39	26	1
1	27	27	5
2-3	25	33	16
4 or more	9	14	78
	—	—	—
	100	100	100
	—	—	—

*Excluding 'not answered'.

What kinds of organisations do councillors belong to?

Political organisations or those connected with work (T.U. or other organisations) account for only a small part of present memberships. More than half of all the organisations to which councillors belong were concerned with educational, religious, welfare or leisure purposes.

In an earlier chapter we have presented information about the ways in which councillors were recruited to council work. The part played in this by political bodies, trade unions or other work organisations was shown to be large but, clearly, once people became councillors their interests ranged much wider.

Membership of local organisations gives the councillor links with various forms of social life and provides the opportunity to develop and hold the support which is necessary for re-election. Such support must necessarily be wider than that provided by the group which originally sponsored the councillor's election. The number and types of the councillor's organisational memberships will then be related to the level of social activity in the area and also to the kind of person he is, the groups with which he has affinities, and the role in public life he seeks to play.

Differences between Councillors

Amongst councillors, as throughout this report, we find group differences of which the largest are those between councillors on the different types of council.

TABLE 6.2
Average number of organisation memberships—
by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metropolitan boroughs	Municipal boroughs and urban districts	Rural districts
Political	0·6	0·7	0·9	1·0	0·7	0·4
Public bodies or committees	1·8	3·5	2·2	1·5	1·7	1·1
Work (T.U. and other)	0·3	0·3	0·5	0·4	0·5	0·1
Others	3·9	4·5	3·5	3·5	3·9	3·4
All organisations .. (Numbers) ..	6·6 (1,235)	9·0 (152)	7·1 (134)	6·4 (46)	6·8 (483)	5·0 (420)

The county councillor belongs to more and the rural district councillor to fewer organisations than others. The county councillor sits on more public bodies or committees than other councillors, and is also more likely than others to be a member of religious, welfare or leisure, or other community groups. It may be that this is because he retains membership in his borough or district organisations as well as taking some part in those operating on the wider scale of his county activities.

The other group differences are smaller, as shown in Table 6.3.

TABLE 6.3
Total membership of organisations of various kinds

Councillor characteristics							Average number of memberships	Proportion with 7 or more memberships
Length of service:								%
Up to 3 years .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5·8	31
4-9 years .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6·9	43
10 or more years .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	7·1	45
Age:								
Under 45 .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6·0	37
45-64 .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6·9	46
65 or over .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5·7	31
Education:								
Elementary .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6·2	36
Secondary .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6·8	45
Further .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6·9	44
Socio-economic group:								
Employers and managers with 25 or more subordinates and professionals .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	8·0	51
Employers and managers with under 25 subordinates and farmers .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5·9	35
Non-manual and own account non-professionals .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6·8	46
Manual and agricultural workers .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6·5	41

When did Councillors join their Organisations?

Table 6.4 shows how old councillors were when they joined the organisations to which they now belong. They joined trade unions and work organisations on average at an earlier age than any other kind of organisation and became members of public bodies or committees at a much later age. Over half of councillors who are now members of trade unions or work organisations first joined under the age of 25, and well over three-quarters of all such councillors had joined these organisations under the age of 35. This situation is very similar to that for the general population. Membership of such organisations, however, is a very small part at present of the total memberships which councillors now have. About one-third of all councillors had joined political organisations under the age of 25 and nearly two-thirds of those who are now members of political organisations had joined them under the age of 35. Councillors seem to have joined political organisations on average at a slightly younger age than electors. A substantial proportion of those who are now members of public bodies or committees had, however, joined them for the first time when they were over 45.

TABLE 6.4
Age at which councillors first joined organisations of various kinds

	Political organisations		Public bodies or committees		Work organisations		Other organisations	
	Cl's. %	Els. %	Cl's. %	Els. %	Cl's. %	Els. %	Cl's. %	
Age:								
Under 25	34	26	2		54	48	33	
25-34	29	31	15		24	28	23	
35-44	20	23	31		10	15	21	
45-54	9	18	27		3	6	12	
55-64	2	1	16		3	2	5	
65 and over	—	1	3		—	—	—	
Not answered	6	—	6		6	1	6	
Total	100	100	100		100	100	100	
(Numbers with memberships)	(852)	(175)	(939)		(420)	(435)	(1,161)	
Average age at joining ..	30 yrs.		45 yrs.		27 yrs.		33 yrs.	

Amongst electors, as amongst councillors, organisational membership seems to be highest around the ages 45-54 and highest also amongst those with some form of higher education.

Table 6.5, which follows, compares organisational attachments of councillors and electors in the different types of council area. County and metropolitan borough councillors were more likely than others to be members of political organisations. County and rural district councillors were less likely to be members of trades unions or professional bodies. It will be noticed that differences between councillors' organisational attachments by no means reflect differences between their electors. Whereas only 50% of the metropolitan borough electors had such attachments just as high a proportion of councillors in those areas as in others had attachments.

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TABLE 6.5
Whether or not a member of organisations—
by council type

	All councils		Counties		County boroughs		Metropoli-tan boroughs		Municipal boroughs and urban districts		Rural districts	
	Cls. %	Els. %	Cls. %	Els. %	Cls. %	Els. %	Cls. %	Els. %	Cls. %	Els. %	Cls. %	Els. %
Member of at least one:												
Political organisation ..	67	8	74		95	4	98	7	70	9	48	10
Public body or committee ..	68	1	90		66	1	68	1	67	1	64	1
Work organisation ..	29	20	25		45	24	42	16	41	20	12	19
Organisation of any type (including religious, welfare, etc.) ..	99	61	99		99	59	99	50	98	65	99	62
(Numbers of councillors)*	(1,155)		(136)		(126)		(43)		(450)		(400)	
(Numbers of electors) ..	(2,184)		(629)		(131)		(988)		(436)			

*Excluding 80 informants who did not answer the question.

The time spent on non-Council organisations

Table 6.6 shows how much time different types of councillors spent on *all* the non-council organisations of which they are now members. In the summary table below, this appears in the total row. The first horizontal row represents the information which councillors gave us about time spent on non-council organisations 'as part of the work of being a councillor'. The difference between these two rows represents time spent on non-council organisations but not as part of the work of a councillor.

Time spent per month on organisations

	All councils		Counties		County boroughs		Metropoli-tan boroughs		Municipal boroughs and urban districts		Rural districts	
	Hrs.	Hrs.	Hrs.	Hrs.	Hrs.	Hrs.	Hrs.	Hrs.	Hrs.	Hrs.	Hrs.	Hrs.
As part of the work of a councillor ..	12		17		13		13		12.5		8	
Not as part of the work of a councillor ..	9		5		10		11		9.5		10	
Total hours per month ..	21		22		23		24		22		18	

It will be seen that most types of councillors spend in total very much the same amount of time on these organisations per month. Rural district councillors spend somewhat less time than others. The greater part of the time spent on these organisations is spent on what councillors regard as 'part of the work of

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a councillor*. Only in rural districts do councillors regard a large part of this time as a private interest rather than a council interest. The proportion of the time which is regarded as 'part of the work of council' is much higher for county councillors than it is for others. For county councillors then, more than for other councillors, the time spent on non-council organisations is more a commitment arising out of council responsibilities than a private interest.

The time spent by councillors on these non-council organisations is of a completely different order from the time spent on them by electors. Spread over all electors only 6·5 hours per month is spent on average in all such organisations. If we take into account only those who are members, it comes to 10·6 hours compared with twice that figure for councillors. And, for the councillor, this is a form of activity which is additional to his work on council committees and time spent with electors. Amongst councillors 44% are spending 19 or more hours a month on these organisations but only 11% of electors are spending as much time. However, the size of the electorate must also be borne in mind. Seven per cent or over 2 million electors say that they are spending 25 hours or more on the work of these organisations each month. This number is 40 times the total number of all kinds of councillors.

TABLE 6.6
Time spent on all organisations in average month—
by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metro-politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs and urban districts	Rural districts
	Cls. %	Cls. %	Cls.	Cls.	Cls.	Cls.
0 hours	1 11	1	1	4	1	2
1-3 hours	6 11	4	2	—	2	12
4-6 hours	9 10	9	8	4	6	14
7-9 hours	4 6	3	5	—	4	6
10-12 hours	15 5	9	11	17	16	16
13-18 hours	11 5	9	9	13	16	5
19-24 hours	12 4	15	12	7	13	10
25 hours or more	32 7	35	39	44	32	27
Not answered/not a member of any	10 41	15	13	11	10	8
Total	100 100	100	100	100	100	100
(Numbers of councillors)	(1,235)	(152)	(134)	(46)	(483)	(420)
(Numbers of electors)	(2,184)					
Average monthly time spent on all organisations:						
Councillors	21 hrs	22 hrs	23 hrs	24 hrs	22 hrs	18 hrs
Electors (members of organisations only)	10·6 hrs					
Electors (all)	6·5 hrs					

Chapter VI

For a substantial proportion of councillors, the time they spend on these organisations has increased since they became councillors. The increase is greatest for county council and county borough councillors and least for rural district councillors. There are some councillors in all types of council, however, who say that they have spent less time on these organisations since becoming a councillor. If we subtract the proportion saying 'less time' from the proportion saying 'more time' we get the net proportion of councillors on average who have spent more time. It is 33% for counties, 21% for county boroughs, 20% for municipal boroughs and urban districts, 11% for metropolitan boroughs and 8% for the rural districts. The metropolitan borough councillors were at the time of the survey spending more time on these organisations than any other kind of councillor and since relatively few of them have on balance increased the time spent before becoming a councillor it follows that metropolitan borough councillors were already *much more involved* in the work of other organisations *before* they became councillors than were any other types of councillors. On the other hand, the net increase in the proportion spending time on these organisations is greatest amongst the county councillors, and since they are at present spending about the average amount of time they must have been much *less* involved than others in such organisations *before* becoming county councillors. Rural district councillors now spend less time than the average on the work of these organisations, but, since this results from a net increase in the proportion spending time in this way, it follows that they were, therefore, even less involved than other councillors in the work of such organisations *before* they became rural district councillors.

The impression given by these data is that the county councillor's interest in non-council organisations is to a large extent an 'official' interest which follows his appointment to the county council. At the other extreme, for the former metropolitan borough councillor interest in the non-council organisations was largely alive *before* his appointment and it may be that council membership for him was partly an expression of the interests he already had in such organisations.

As the number of memberships increases, so does the time spent on non-council organisations in a way which may be summarised as follows:

Number of memberships			
	0-3	4-6	7 or more
Average number of hours per month spent on organisations	13	19

One-half of those with seven or more memberships were spending 25 hours a month or more on these activities, and over 40% of all councillors were members of 7 or more non-council organisations. Those councillors whose first contacts with council work came through their membership of these non-council organisations continue to spend more time with them (24 hours per month) than do other councillors (19 hours).

Voluntary Organisations and Public Needs

The substantial part of councillors' time spent on other organisations shows how involved councillors become in the activities of other bodies. There is, then, some interest in examining the opinions of councillors on the value of voluntary organisations in meeting new or developing needs. The great majority of councillors do see advantages in the use of voluntary organisations for meeting some needs. A substantial proportion, however, also see disadvantages. The relative balance of advantages and disadvantages may be presented in the following way:

* Are there advantages/disadvantages for councils in using voluntary organisations to meet new and developing needs? —by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metropolitan boroughs	Municipal boroughs and urban districts	Rural districts
Advantages ..	% 80	% 83	% 85	% 83	% 81	% 75
Disadvantages ..	% 42	% 49	% 51	% 46	% 42	% 35

It will be seen that the relative balance of advantages to disadvantages is viewed in very much the same way in most types of council. Everywhere very many more see advantages than see disadvantages.

The main *advantages* councillors see in using these organisations are expressed in such remarks as 'saving the council money and time' (30% of all councillors); they give 'a more human touch' to the activity (14%); voluntary workers are 'more enthusiastic' (14%) or have 'specialised knowledge' (12%). On the other hand amongst the *disadvantages* seen by some councillors in using them were that 'voluntary bodies are inefficient' (19%) or that they 'have financial and staffing difficulties'.

The younger councillors and those with further education were *less* likely to see advantages and more likely to see disadvantages than others.

Table 6.7 shows the results of asking councillors the question: 'On the whole, what do you think would be the best way to meet new and developing needs of the people in this area—would it be best for the council to provide all services, for the council to help voluntary organisations to provide some services, or for voluntary organisations to meet most new needs?' It will be seen that very small proportions indeed, everywhere, think that the main reliance should be on voluntary organisations. On the other hand, a substantial minority of councillors think that councils should provide all the new services or extensions of services which may prove necessary. Everywhere, however, a large majority of councillors thought that the best way would be for the council to help voluntary organisations provide some of the services.

TABLE 6.7
 'What is the best way to meet new and developing needs?'—
 by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metro- politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs and urban districts	Rural districts
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Council to provide all services ..	20	15	20	24	22	19
Council to help voluntary organisations to provide some services ..	73	77	78	72	71	72
Voluntary organisations to meet most new needs ..	4	3	2	2	4	5
Don't know ..	2	2	—	—	2	3
Not answered ..	1	3	—	2	1	1
Total (Numbers) ..	100 (1,235)	100 (152)	100 (134)	100 (46)	100 (483)	100 (420)

It does not follow from these answers that councillors think that all future services or extensions to existing services should involve the assistance of voluntary organisations. There is for example a notable difference between the activities which councillors thought had done 'most to help people' during 1964 and those activities thought to be 'suitable' for voluntary organisations to help. Housing (28%), utility services (17%) and town planning (11%) which are necessarily public services, come first and old people's welfare (7%) is fourth in the list. Similarly, when councillors were asked: 'Is there any one particular problem in your area which will need a great deal of attention in the next year or so?' very few mentioned problems for which they suggested voluntary organisations were most suitable. Councillors clearly had some particular services in mind when they were answering the question and it is shown in the following table that apart from some aspects of old people's welfare less than one-third of any type of councillor thought that voluntary organisations were 'most suitable' for any particular service.

Table 6.8 shows for what kind of services councillors thought that voluntary organisations were most suitable. No doubt, in answering this question councillors were very often influenced by the way in which such services are made available at the present time. This is clearly reflected in the tendency, which is much the same everywhere, for councillors to think that services for old people (*Meals on Wheels* is largely an old persons' service) could be provided suitably by voluntary organisations helped by councils. The main groups of services for which voluntary organisations are thought to be suitable appear to be those meeting the needs of the very old or the young. Many of the other services mentioned, e.g., child welfare, are now in a stage of expansion and experience in their operation is changing as professional staff is built up. This process of development may well, in time, affect opinions on the issues discussed in this section.

Councillors and other organisations

TABLE 6.8
 'For what kind of services are voluntary organisations most suitable?'—
 by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metro-politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs and urban districts	Rural districts
Old people's welfare	%	%	%	Nos.	%	%
Meals on wheels ..	76	77	76	(29)	83	67
Youth clubs/services ..	49	49	59	(14)	50	46
Recreational/cultural facilities ..	30	32	41	(15)	26	27
Help for blind/handicapped ..	24	16	16	(6)	31	22
Medical auxiliary services ..	19	20	30	(8)	16	17
Advisory services ..	14	22	14	(6)	15	8
Child welfare ..	10	6	20	(4)	11	9
Personal welfare problems ..	7	8	8	(4)	6	7
Alleviating effects of poverty ..	7	7	9	(2)	3	10
Civil defence ..	4	2	4	—	4	4
Other answers ..	15	14	14	(4)	17	13
Not answered ..	1	2	—	(2)	1	—
Total ..	260	261	293		265	236
(Numbers thinking that voluntary organisations can help to meet needs)	(946)	(121)	(107)	(34)	(360)	(324)

(Percentages add up to more than 100 as some informants gave more than one answer).

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER VI

1. Councillors spend between 20 and 25% of all their *public* time with other organisations. And this together with the time spent on their own account with other organisations adds up to about 21 hours a month on average. In comparison, very many electors are not members of any organisation. Those who are spend on average about 10½ hours a month on them, and 11% of electors claim to spend 19 or more hours a month on organisations.
2. Councillors belong on average to between 6 and 7 organisations and many councillors belong to a very large number. Political organisations or trade unions account for only a small part and more than half of all memberships are of organisations concerned with educational, religious, welfare or leisure purposes. County councillors have more memberships than any other type of councillor and are more likely to think of these interests *as a part of the work* of a councillor, whilst others and especially rural district councillors are more likely to regard a large part of this time as a *private* rather than a public interest.
3. Membership of these other organisations seems to reach a peak around the age of 45–54 and is highest also amongst councillors with some form of further education.
4. Some of the data presented in this chapter may be brought together to form an index of involvement in voluntary organisations. This index by council type shows that county councillors are most involved, although not very much more than most other councillors except those in rural districts, who are least involved:

**Index of involvement in voluntary organisations —
by council type**

	Counties	County boroughs	Metro- politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs and urban districts	Rural districts
Member of 7 or more voluntary organisations	% 59 (1)	% 43 (3)	% 35 (4)	% 44 (2)	% 29 (5)
Spent 13 hours or more per month on voluntary organisations	59 (4)	60 (3)	64 (1)	61 (2)	42 (5)
Believe there are advantages for councils in using voluntary organisations to meet needs ..	83 (2=)	85 (1)	83 (2=)	81 (4)	75 (5)
Believe councils should help organisations to provide some services or organisations should meet most new needs	80 (1=)	80 (1=)	74 (5)	75 (4)	77 (3)
Index of involvement in voluntary organisations	281 (1)	268 (2)	256 (4)	261 (3)	223 (5)

Summary of Chapter VI

The corresponding index by age gives the middle-aged councillors as the most involved in voluntary organisations, and the elderly as the least involved:

	Age		
	Under 45	45-64	65 & over
Index of involvement in voluntary organisations ..	242 (2)	267 (1)	219 (3)

Smaller differences emerge between the socio-economic groups, although the larger employers, managers and professionals appear to be the most involved:

	Employers and managers with 25 or more subordinates and professionals	Employers and managers with under 25 subordinates and farmers	Non-manual and own account non-professionals	Manual and agricultural workers
Index of involvement in voluntary organisations	277 (1)	243 (3=)	260 (2)	243 (3=)

5. Councillors in all types of area see more advantages than disadvantages in using voluntary organisations to meet new and developing needs. They have some particular services in mind as those for which voluntary organisations are most suitable. The most prominent are services for old people (especially 'Meals on Wheels'), youth clubs and services, recreational facilities, help for handicapped people (especially the blind) and medical auxiliary services.

CHAPTER VII

Party Politics

The place of party politics in local government is much debated but not very well documented. Any thorough-going study of the subject would need to consider, amongst other matters, how during the process of local government political philosophy is translated into administrative decisions and routines; or the way in which party controversy relates to the level or direction of political feeling in the local electorate; or, most difficult of all, the effect of prevalent styles and forms of party political debate on the choice of candidates with different education, experience or personality. Such issues could not be effectively studied within the time limits set for this present report. No doubt, in time, other investigators will pursue them. Here we present some information on the extent to which councillors are associated with party politics and on their attitudes to some of its effects on council work.

Membership of Political Parties

Two-thirds of all councillors were members of political organisations at the time of the survey. Nearly all county borough and metropolitan borough councillors were members but less than half of all rural district councillors. These proportions are reflected in the way councillors say they were first brought into touch with council work. Where membership of political bodies is high so is their influence in bringing people into councils.

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metro- politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs and urban districts	Rural districts
Members of at least one political organisation ..	%	%	%	%	%	%
	67	74	95	98	70	48
First brought into touch with council through a political body	34	38	57	72	42	12
Asked to stand by a political body ..	35	40	62	70	47	8

Only 34% of all councillors say that political bodies formally brought them into council work. More informal means of recruitment played a substantial role in the way discussed in Chapter II. And 12 or 13% of those who are now members of a political party only joined 'about the same time' or 'well after' they first stood for the council. Of course it may be that once the decision was taken to stand many whose invitation to do so had been somewhat informal nevertheless received political party support at the election.

The average age at which councillors had joined political parties was about 30, but over a third of all present members joined under the age of 25. Their interest in politics began even younger. Nearly half of present party members first became 'interested in politics' under the age of 20. Only 10% first became interested over the age of 40.

Table 7.1 shows that while rather more of those with further education said they were not members of a political party at the time of the survey, those who were had first become interested at a younger age than those with elementary or secondary education.

TABLE 7.1
Age at which councillors first became interested in politics —
by education

	Total	Elementary	Secondary	Further
Under 20	% 31	% 28	% 32	% 37
20-29	21	28	18	15
30 and over	15	16	18	5
Not a member of a political party/ not answered	33	28	32	43
Total .. (Numbers) ..	100 (1,235)	100 (518)	100 (467)	100 (216)

(The total of 1,235 includes 34 informants who did not give their education.)

To what extent do councillors regard themselves as involved in party or group politics? It is not always clear from the titles which councillors give to their groups whether they are involved in 'party politics' or not. In particular such designations as 'Ratepayers' or 'Independents' make a satisfactory watertight classification difficult. Where 'Independents' in fact formed an organised group on councils it was necessary for purposes of simple classification to treat them as a party group. All councillors were therefore asked: 'Are you a member of the majority group on the council, the main opposition group, another group, or would you consider yourself independent of any group?' The interviewers' instructions on this question read:

'The majority and main opposition groups mean the biggest and the next biggest groups on the council, irrespective of what they call themselves; i.e. Ratepayers' Association or Independents could be the main majority or main opposition group. Code "independent" only if the independent group (if any) is neither the majority nor the main opposition group. If the councillor is a member of one of two opposition groups of equal size, code "main opposition group".'

Table 7.2 shows how councillors answered these questions. Fifty-seven per cent of councillors considered themselves members of one or other of the leading group on councils, but 39% do not consider themselves part of any organised group. This latter proportion rose to 71% in rural district councils.

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Identification with a leading group appears to be the greatest in the county boroughs and the metropolitan boroughs. Amongst metropolitan borough councillors very few considered themselves in any other way than as members of a main council group. The municipal boroughs and urban districts hold a relatively intermediate position.

Amongst the different socio-economic groups, the manual and non-manual workers were more likely to consider themselves members of the leading groups than other councillors, and the small employers and farmers were more likely to think of themselves as 'independent' (Table 7.3).

TABLE 7.2
Type of group on council—
by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metro-politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs and urban districts	Rural districts
Majority group ..	% 42	% 44	% 69	% 68	% 48	% 22
Main opposition group ..	15	23	21	28	17	7
Other group ..	4	5	5	2	7	—
Independent ..	39	27	4	2	28	71
Not answered ..	—	1	1	—	—	—
Total .. (Numbers)	100 (1,235)	100 (152)	100 (134)	100 (46)	100 (483)	100 (420)

TABLE 7.3
Type of group on council—
by socio-economic group

	Total	Employers and managers with 25 or more subordinates and professionals	Employers and managers with under 25 subordinates and farmers	Non-manual and own account non-professionals	Manual and agricultural workers
Majority group ..	% 42	% 39	% 26	% 51	% 68
Main opposition group ..	15	17	10	20	19
Other group ..	4	8	2	6	3
Independent ..	39	36	62	23	10
Not answered ..	—	—	—	—	—
Total .. (Numbers)	100 (1,235)	100 (188)	100 (463)	100 (269)	100 (197)

(The total of 1,235 includes 118 informants who were retired, had never worked or were in residual categories of employment.)

Those with only elementary education were more likely than other councillors to describe themselves as members of the 'majority group'. That is to say, they were more likely than other councillors to cluster on particular groups of councils which they and their political associates controlled (Table 7.4), and similarly with aldermen. Over 60 per cent of councillors who were returned unopposed described themselves as independent (Table 7.5). This reflects the big majority of 'independents' on rural district councils where, also, a majority of councillors were returned unopposed.

TABLE 7.4
Type of group on council —
by education

	Total	Elementary	Secondary	Further
		%	%	%
Majority group	42	52	34	35
Main opposition group	15	13	19	13
Other group	4	4	3	7
Independent	39	31	44	45
Not answered	—	—	—	—
Total (Numbers) ..	100 (1,235)	100 (518)	100 (467)	100 (216)

(The total of 1,235 includes 34 informants who did not give their education.)

TABLE 7.5
Type of group on council —
by status on council

	Total	Councillor unopposed	Councillor opposed	Aldermen
		%	%	%
Majority group	42	33	45	59
Main opposition group	15	5	22	13
Other group	4	1	6	2
Independent	39	61	27	24
Not answered	—	—	—	2
Total (Numbers) ..	100 (1,235)	100 (450)	100 (620)	100 (127)

(The total of 1,235 includes 38 informants who did not give their status on council.)

Party politics and choice of candidates

We asked councillors if they thought that it was 'essential for a candidate to have the support of a party organisation in order to get elected'. Table 7.6 shows that nearly all county borough and metropolitan borough councillors thought that party support was essential. In the rural districts, on the other

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hand, only very small proportions thought it essential, whilst in the municipal boroughs and urban districts and in the counties very substantial minorities did not think that party support was necessary to get elected.

TABLE 7.6
 'Is it essential for a candidate to have support of a party organisation to get elected?'—
 by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metro-politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs and urban districts	Rural districts
Yes	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	48	60	92	94	58	13
No	50	38	7	4	41	85
Don't know/not answered	2	2	1	2	1	2
Total (Numbers)	100 (1,235)	100 (152)	100 (134)	100 (46)	100 (483)	100 (420)

We may compare the proportion of councillors who identify themselves with the two leading groups on councils with the proportion thinking party support necessary:

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metro-politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs and urban districts	Rural districts
Members of two leading groups	%	%	%	%	%	%
Members of two leading groups	57	67	90	96	65	29
Think party support essential for election	48	60	92	94	58	13
Asked to stand by political party	35	40	62	70	47	8

The two first lines, except for rural district councillors are very similar. But only about two-thirds of those in most types of council who thought party support essential for election were formally asked to stand by political parties. Political parties, then, have actually played a smaller part in sponsoring councillors than many councillors realise.

Younger candidates were *not* more likely than older ones to feel that party support was essential for election but those with only elementary education were somewhat *more* likely than those with secondary or further education to believe that party support was necessary.

At an earlier stage in the interview councillors were asked, in the light of their own experience, which personal characteristics they thought were needed to make a good councillor. Later they were reminded of what they had said in answer to this question and then, if they thought that party support was essential for election, they were asked if this made it more or less likely that people with desirable characteristics would be chosen as candidates. Table 7.7 shows that most of those who thought that party support was necessary for election did not think that this had adverse effects on the choice of the most desirable type of candidate, but 20% of those thinking that party support was necessary thought it would make the selection of desirable candidates less likely. This amounts to just under 10% of the whole sample.

TABLE 7.7

'Does the fact that candidates have to be supported by a party organisation make it more or less likely that good people will be chosen as candidates?'—
by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metro- politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs and urban districts	Rural districts
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Party support makes no difference	45	46	40	46	46	47
Party support makes good candidates <i>more</i> likely ..	32	34	42	27	29	27
Party support makes good candidates <i>less</i> likely ..	20	14	16	27	23	20
Not answered	3	6	2	—	2	6
Total ..	100	100	100	100	100	100
(numbers saying it is essential for a candidate to have party support)	(607)	(93)	(125)	(44)	(285)	(60)

It is of some interest that in the metropolitan boroughs, where membership of the two main groups on councils was highest, a larger proportion than anywhere else thought that the need for party support would make it *less likely* that desirable candidates would be chosen. In contrast, in the county boroughs where most councillors were also associated with some kind of party group, 39% of those believing that party support was necessary for election, thought that this would make the selection of the best kind of candidate *more likely*.

Opinion on the effects of party support was evenly divided in the metropolitan boroughs but, on balance, favourable elsewhere, and especially so in the county boroughs.

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We may recast these figures in the framework of the whole sample so as to permit generalisations on the attitudes of councillors on this theme.

TABLE 7.8
 'Councillors' opinions on the effects of party support on choice of candidates' —
 by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metro-politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs and urban districts	Rural Districts
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Party support makes no difference	22	28	37	43	27	7
Party support makes good candidates <i>more</i> likely ..	16	21	39	26	17	4
Party support makes good candidates <i>less</i> likely ..	10	9	15	26	14	3
Party support not necessary for election	50	38	7	4	41	85
Don't know/not answered	2	4	2	1	1	1
Total ..	100	100	100	100	100	100
(Numbers) ..	(1,235)	(152)	(134)	(46)	(483)	(420)

Nearly three-quarters of all councillors either believed that party support was not necessary for election or that, where present, it did not make the choice of suitable candidates more or less likely.

The manual worker councillors were somewhat more likely than the employers and managers in larger businesses to believe that party support *improved* the possible choice of what they considered to be good candidates. Younger councillors felt much the same as older councillors on this issue. Those with only elementary education were more likely than those with secondary or further education to believe that party support improved the possible choice of good candidates.

It is of some interest that councillors' opinions on the personal characteristics they thought were necessary 'to make a good councillor' were not related to opinions of the effect of party support on the choice of candidate. Whether they stressed character ('sociability' or 'leadership') or intellectual qualities ('intelligence', 'education') very much the same proportions thought that party support made no difference or on balance that it was more likely that it would lead to 'good' candidates being chosen.

Other information which had a bearing on the issue considered here is reported in other chapters. Some of the points made elsewhere, however, are worth repeating here. For example, in a later chapter we show how councillors reply when asked to say if they think certain features 'put people off' standing for the council. One amongst these features was party politics. When councillors were asked to say which one of the features mentioned was 'most likely to put people off standing' party politics was selected by only 7% of councillors. Asked at another point in the interview if they, personally, knew 'people who in recent years had given up council work' and, if so, why had they given it up only 4% of councillors said such people had given it up because they were 'frustrated by the party system'. When we asked again if councillors knew people 'who in recent years might have made good councillors but would not stand' and, if so, why they would not stand, 8% of councillors said such people would not stand because of the party political structure of the council. And, finally, when councillors were asked, 'Is there any one thing which might make you eventually decide to give up?' only 4% of councillors gave answers which could be summarised collectively as 'frustrations of the party system'.

We must on this issue keep in mind the fact that one-half of all councillors said they thought it was not essential to have party support in order to get elected to council. If rural district councillors are excluded, the proportion thinking this becomes much smaller, perhaps about one-third of all councillors. For the rest, a quarter of all councillors, or about one-third, excluding rural districts thought that whilst support was necessary it made little difference to the choice of candidates. The remaining councillors who thought that party support was essential and made a difference to the choice of candidate on balance thought that the effect was to *improve* the chances that what they thought were good candidates would be chosen.

The general weight of these opinions of *sitting councillors* is that party politics plays only a very small part in affecting willingness to stand for or stay on councils. These are the views of councillors who, by a large majority, are themselves members of political parties and involved in the day-to-day work of the majority group on councils or of the main opposition group. This personal involvement in council party politics is bound to colour the opinions expressed on the issues examined in this chapter.

Party Politics and Council Work

Apart from the effect on the selection of candidates, what did councillors think was the effect of party politics on the *work of councils*? Table 7.9 shows that the great majority of councillors *did not* think that the work of councils was affected at all. In general the more councils operated on party political lines the more likely they were to say that the work of their councils was affected. Metropolitan borough councillors, however, were an exception. Thirty-six per cent of councillors who thought party support was essential for election, but only 10% of those who did not think party support was essential, said that all or some of the work of their councils was affected by political attachments.

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TABLE 7.9

'Does the fact that many councillors are attached to political groups affect the main work of your council?' — by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metropolitan boroughs	Municipal boroughs and urban districts	Rural districts
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Councillors' attachment to political groups:						
Does not affect council	75	74	48	67	71	89
Affects some of the work	16	21	38	18	15	8
Affects all of the work ..	7	4	13	13	11	—
Don't know/not answered	2	1	1	2	3	3
Total .. (Numbers) ..	100 (1,235)	100 (152)	100 (134)	100 (46)	100 (483)	100 (420)

In what ways was the work of councils thought to be affected? The largest group of answers in Table 7.10 criticize the effects of ' doctrinaire policies applied regardless of individual circumstances '. Fifty-six per cent of those thinking that the work of councils was affected by attachment to political groups gave this reply. This amounts to 13% of all councillors. A much smaller proportion thought that attachment to political groups affects council work by causing delays in decision-making or the operations of councils. This amounts to only 2% of all councillors.

TABLE 7.10
Ways in which council work was thought to be affected —
by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metro-politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs and urban districts	Rural districts
	%	%	%	Nos.	%	%
Doctrinaire policies regardless of individual circumstances						
Delay of work because of political discussion ..	56	46	58	(6)	58	60
Decisions delayed because politically inexpedient	7	10	12	(2)	—	20
Helps to get clear-cut decision	2	—	4	—	2	—
Other answers	12	3	17	(2)	13	10
Not answered	13	15	4	(5)	18	—
Total .. (Numbers saying some or all of the work affected)	100 (298)	100 (39)	100 (69)		100 (135)	100 (40)

If we take the first three kinds of answers mentioned as indications of adverse effects, we can summarise the impression given by the responses noted in this section in the following way:

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metro- politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs and urban districts	Rural districts
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Councillors' political attachment does not affect council's main work ...	75	74	48	67	71	89
Affects work adversely ...	16	14	38	17	17	7
Helps to get clear-cut decisions ...	3	1	9	(2)	3	1

It is in the county boroughs that there is most adverse comment on the effects of councillors' political attachment. It is also there, however, that the largest body of favourable comment emerges.

At other points in our interview, questions were asked which elicited responses which also relate to this section. They are more fully reported elsewhere but the relevant parts are worth noting here. When councillors were asked which of a series of issues 'raises the *most* serious problem for local government' only 7% mentioned party politics compared with 27% who selected 'getting enough good people to stand' or 16% who chose 'the time involved in council work'.

When councillors were asked to look back on their time as councillors and to say 'what one thing did you find most frustrating or unsatisfactory' only 8% said party politics or 'group opposition' although another 8% also complained of the 'ignorance', 'apathy' or 'hostility' of other council members. Perhaps not all of this second group were political opponents.

When asked to say if their council made full use of its powers and, if not, why not, only 2% of all councillors said that party politics hindered the full use of council powers. When councillors were asked directly if more time could be found for council work by spending less time on party debate 13% said 'yes'.

The impression given by this information is that for most councillors party politics does not have much effect on the work of their councils. The weight of rural district councillors in the total picture must be borne in mind but, even if they are excluded, only minorities mentioned adverse effects. In the county boroughs, however, there is a substantial proportion who are critical.

Is Party Politics essential to Council work?

Finally, all councillors were asked whether they thought that, on the whole, the party system is essential to the work of councils or whether the work could be better done without it. Table 7.11 shows that the majority of councillors felt that council work could be better done without the party system.

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TABLE 7.11
 'Is the party system essential to the work of councils?' —
 by council type

	All councils	All councils excluding rural districts	Counties	County boroughs	Metro-politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs and urban districts	Rural districts
Party system essential	% 29	% 42	% 35	% 66	% 74	% 35	% 4
The work could be done better without it ..	63	49	52	24	20	58	89
Other answers ..	6	7	10	7	4	6	5
Don't know ..	1	1	2	2	2	—	1
Not answered ..	1	1	1	1	—	1	1
Total (Numbers) ..	100 (1,235)	100 (815)	100 (152)	100 (134)	100 (46)	100 (483)	100 (420)

Amongst the 'other answers' were such responses as 'it is not essential but the council functions better with it'.

There are very great differences in the views of different types of councillors on this issue. Whereas nearly all rural district councillors thought that their work could be better done without the party system, only 20% of metropolitan borough councillors and 24% of county borough councillors thought this. On the other hand 74% of metropolitan borough councillors and 66% of county borough councillors thought that the party system was 'essential' to the work of councils. If the views of rural district councillors are excluded, the proportion thinking that council work could be done better without party politics falls below 50%.

Most of those saying that the party system was essential were members of the majority or main opposition group, that is to say those most involved in the party politics of local councils (Table 7.12). This is to be expected.

TABLE 7.12
 Type of group on council —
 by 'Is the party system essential to the work of councils?'

	Total	Party system essential	Would work better without party system
		%	%
Majority group	% 42	% 71	% 27
Main opposition group	15	22	10
Other group	4	6	4
Independent	39	1	59
Total (Numbers)	100 (1,235)	100 (361)	100 (775)

(The total of 1,235 includes informants who gave other answers or no answer to the question on the party system.)

A very large part of those believing that local government would work better without party politics were classified as 'independent' according to the principle outlined at the beginning of this chapter. However, 37% of those saying this, or just under one-quarter of all councillors, were at the time of the survey members of the majority or main opposition groups. This is consistent with our earlier finding that, for example, amongst county borough councillors (nearly all of whom were members of the two main groups) there was a substantial proportion who thought that party politics affected council work adversely.

A very large proportion of councillors who had been returned unopposed thought that council work could be done better without party politics (Table 7.13). This explains why amongst rural district councillors, the majority of whom were returned unopposed, such a large proportion did not think party politics essential. In contrast to these views almost a half of all aldermen thought party politics essential to local government.

TABLE 7.13
'Is the party system essential to the work of councils?'—
by status on council

	Total	Councillor unopposed	Councillor opposed	Alderman
Party system essential .. .	% 29	% 15	% 36	% 48
The work could be done better without it .. .	63	79	56	41
Other answers .. .	6	5	7	7
Don't know .. .	1	—	1	1
Not answered .. .	1	1	—	3
Total (Numbers) .. .	100 (1,235)	100 (450)	100 (620)	100 (127)

(The total of 1,235 includes 38 informants who did not give their status on council.)

The main reasons given by councillors for taking either of these contrasting positions on the party politics system are shown in Tables 7.14 and 7.15. The main argument for party politics everywhere was that it 'gets the work done more quickly'. Smaller proportions thought that the party system was essential because, by standing for definite policies, it clarified the alternatives for the electorate or because it ensured a supply of candidates. We have shown earlier the substantial part that the political parties play in recruitment.

The main reasons given for believing that the work of councils could be better done without the party system was that party policies were pursued 'regardless of individual cases' or, equally important, that party politics 'had no relevance to local government'.

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TABLE 7.14
Reasons for believing party system essential —
by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metropolitan boroughs	Municipal boroughs and urban districts	Rural districts
	%	%	%	%	%	Nos.
Work gets done more quickly/no arguments	62	78	67	67	68	(16)
Political parties stand for definite things	17	11	16	20	18	(4)
Party system ensures adequate supply of candidates	14	11	11	18	16	—
Because some form of grouping would arise anyway	10	11	16	12	7	—
Local government should be a microcosm of central government	2	1	1	—	4	—
Because it exists/it's the only way/it's the accepted theory	4	—	6	3	5	—
Other answers	6	9	3	3	7	—
Not answered	7	7	1	—	5	(1)
Total	122	128	121	123	130	
(Numbers believing party system essential)	(361)	(54)	(89)	(34)	(168)	(16)

TABLE 7.15
Reasons for believing the work could be done better without party system —
by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metro- politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs and urban districts	Rural districts
	%	%	%	Nos.	%	%
Party policies are pursued regardless of the individual	48	47	59	(7)	58	33
Party politics have no relevance to local government	47	39	22	(3)	43	52
Causes animosity/ill-feeling/bickering	15	18	6	(1)	8	19
Causes a lot of unnecessary discussion	7	3	9	(1)	8	6
Cuts out suitable candidates	6	5	16	(2)	6	3
Not answered	7	9	6	(1)	6	6
Total	130	121	118		129	119
(Numbers believing work could be done better without party system)	(775)	(79)	(32)	(9)	(279)	(376)

(In both tables above percentages add up to more than 100 because some informants gave more than one answer.)

Differences between other groupings of councillors on this issue are almost as large as those between councillors in different types of authority. Table 7.16 shows that manual and non-manual worker councillors clearly take a different view from the employers and managers of large or small businesses. There were, however, only small differences between the age groups on this issue. Much more striking is the situation shown in Table 7.17 which shows councillors' views by their age when they first became interested in politics.

TABLE 7.16
'Is the party system essential to the work of councils?'—
by socio-economic group

	Total	Employers and managers with 25 or more subordinates and professionals	Employers and managers with under 25 subordinates and farmers	Non-manual and own account non-professionals	Manual and agricultural workers
Party system essential	%	%	%	%	%
The work could be done better without it .. .	29	25	14	42	56
Other answers ..	63	69	81	48	31
Don't know ..	6	4	4	9	11
Not answered ..	1	2	1	1	—
Total ..	100 (Numbers) (1,235)	100 (188)	100 (463)	100 (269)	100 (197)

(The total of 1,235 includes 118 informants who were retired, had never worked or were in residual categories of employment.)

TABLE 7.17
'Is the party system essential to the work of councils?'—
by age when first became interested in politics

	Total	Age when first interested in politics:				Other*
		Under 21	21-30	31-40	41 and over	
Party system essential ..	%	%	%	%	%	%
Work could be done better without it .. .	29	48	41	35	22	2
Don't know .. .	63	41	47	62	70	94
Other answers .. .	6	9	11	3	7	2
Not answered .. .	1	1	—	—	—	1
Total ..	100 (Numbers) (1,235)	100 (450)	100 (232)	100 (71)	100 (70)	100 (412)

*'Other' column includes those who are not members of a political party or who did not give age when first interested in politics.

The younger the age at which councillors began to interest themselves in politics the more convinced they were of the role of party politics. However, even amongst the most convinced—those who came into politics at a very young

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age—less than a half thought that the party system was essential to the work of councils. Those who joined political parties about the time they first stood for the council or soon after were much *less likely* to think the party system essential.

Those councillors with only elementary education were *more likely* than others to believe the party system essential but at least a half of them thought the work could be 'done better without it'.

If we take all the groups by which responses to this question were analysed, we can see that it was in the county boroughs and former metropolitan boroughs that the largest proportions said the party political system was 'essential' in local government. Only amongst the manual worker councillors did more than half (56%) say it was essential.

We have noted already that when asked which of a series of issues councillors believed were most important in discouraging people from standing for the council, only 7% chose party politics. Amongst those thinking that local government work could be done better without party politics the proportion rose, but only to 9%.

Finally we have taken a group of issues, all of which give some indication of higher than average interest or enthusiasm for council work or the reform of procedures, and analysed these by the opinions held on party politics in council work (Table 7.18).

The results seem to suggest that, as a group, councillors who think party politics essential are somewhat more likely to be the keener members of councils.

TABLE 7.18
Interest in council work or in reform of procedures—
by 'Is the party system essential to the work of council?'

	Party system essential	Council work would be done better without party system
There is not enough time for all aspects of council work	54	29
Council rather than voluntary organisations should provide all services needed to meet new needs ..	30	16
More time could be found if councillors sat on fewer committees	32	24
More time could be found by leaving more detailed work to officials	41	28

Finally, we have put together the answers of councillors to three questions to form an index of favourable attitude to party politics. Table 7.19 shows this index by council type. The percentages represent proportions believing that party support is essential for election to the council, that party support makes

good candidates more likely, and that the party system is essential to the work of councils. County borough councillors score highest on this index and the former metropolitan borough councillors a close second. At the other end of the scale, the members of rural district councils have a very negative attitude to party politics. The counties, municipal boroughs and urban districts occupy an intermediate position.

TABLE 7.19
Index of favourable attitude to party politics—
by council type

	Counties	County boroughs	Metro- politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs and urban districts	Rural districts
	%	%	%	%	%
Believe party support is essential for election	60 (3)	92 (2)	94 (1)	58 (4)	13 (5)
Believe party support makes good candidates more likely	21 (3)	39 (1)	26 (2)	17 (4)	4 (5)
Believe party system is essential	35 (3=)	66 (2)	74 (1)	35 (3=)	4 (5)
Index of favourable attitude to party politics	116 (3)	197 (1)	194 (2)	110 (4)	21 (5)

Table 7.20 shows how the various socio-economic groups score on the index of favourable attitude to party politics. It will be seen that the manual workers are most favourable, followed by the non-manual workers. On the other hand, the larger employers and professionals, and even more so the smaller employers and farmers, are unfavourable to party politics. Part of this difference is, however, accounted for by the distribution of socio-economic groups among council types, for example, the farmers in the rural districts.

TABLE 7.20
Index of favourable attitude to party politics—
by socio-economic group

	Employers and managers with 25 or more subordinates and professionals	Employers and managers with under 25 subordinates and farmers	Non-manual and own account non-professionals	Manual and agricultural workers
	%	%	%	%
Believe party support is essential for election	50 (3)	27 (4)	70 (2)	74 (1)
Believe party support makes good candidates more likely	19 (4)	30 (3)	35 (2)	40 (1)
Believe party system is essential	25 (3)	14 (4)	42 (2)	56 (1)
Index of favourable attitude to party politics	94 (3)	71 (4)	147 (2)	170 (1)

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The differences between age groups in the index of favourable attitude to party politics are not so large as those between council types and socio-economic groups (Table 7.21). Younger councillors are rather more inclined than older ones to be favourable to party politics, but the differences between the middle-aged and older groups are negligible.

TABLE 7.21
Index of favourable attitude to party politics — by age

	Age		
	Under 45	45-64	65 and over
	%	%	%
Believe party support is essential for election	50 (1)	49 (2)	45 (3)
Believe party support makes good candidates more likely	38 (1)	30 (3)	32 (2)
Believe party system is essential	35 (1)	29 (2)	27 (3)
Index of favourable attitude to party politics	123 (1)	108 (2)	104 (3)

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER VII

1. Two-thirds of all councillors are members of political organisations but the proportion varies greatly, from 95% of county borough councillors to about half that proportion in the rural districts. Many fewer councillors, however, had actually been brought into council work by political bodies and 12% of those who are now members joined *after* or about the time they joined the council.
2. It is not easy to decide if any group on the council is a political body, because of the various titles used by many groups, but if we assume that members of the majority group or the main opposition, where councils so divide, may be described as political groups, then we can say to what extent both councillors and councils are 'party political'. In county boroughs and the former metropolitan boroughs nearly all councillors can be so described. In the rural districts, on the other hand, over 70% described themselves as independent or not attached to any formally organised majority or main opposition group. Nearly two-thirds of the smaller employers and farmers describe themselves as independent. Only 10% of the manual worker councillors do so, whilst 87% say they are members of the majority or main opposition group in council.
3. Councillors were divided 48/50 on whether party support was necessary for election to local councils. The proportion thinking such support was necessary was of course directly related to whether or not the councillors' own council was organised on party lines but even so only about two-thirds of those who said party support was essential were themselves formally asked to stand by a political party.
4. Only about one-quarter of all councillors thought that party support was both necessary *and* that this affected the kind of candidate chosen. On balance more thought it *improved* the chances of good candidates than thought that it made them less likely.
5. Three-quarters of all councillors said that they did not think that party politics affected the work of councils. In the county boroughs, a much larger proportion than elsewhere thought that the work was affected. The minority of councillors who said party politics affected the work thought it was affected through the enforcement of 'doctrinaire policies' or through delay 'because of political discussion'. Two-thirds of the comments on the effects of party politics on the *work* of the council were thus critical but these critical comments came from only 12% of all councillors. Other comments suggested that the effects of party politics were favourable and were expressed in such terms as 'helps to get clear-cut decisions'. The county borough councillors, who made most adverse comments, *also* made most favourable comments.
6. When councillors were asked if they thought the party system essential to the work of councils, a majority said the work could be done better without it but there are great differences between the views of councillors in different areas on this question. Eighty-nine per cent of rural district councillors, for example, thought local council work could be better done without the party system but

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only 24% of county borough councillors. If the rural districts are excluded from the total only 49% of the remaining councillors think the work could be done better without the party system. Most of the councillors who thought the system essential were members of the majority or main opposition group—they were themselves involved in the party politics of local councils. Similarly a majority of those who thought the work could be better done without it called themselves 'independent'. But 37% of those who thought the work could be better done without it were also at the time of the survey members of the majority or main opposition groups. The main argument for the party system was that 'the work gets done more quickly'. The main arguments against it were that 'party policies are pursued regardless of the individual' or 'party politics have no relevance to local government'.

7. Manual worker councillors were the only grouping with a majority in favour of the party system (56%). The smaller employers and farmers had the largest majority against it (81%).

8. Attitudes towards party politics were most favourable amongst county borough councillors, younger councillors (under 45) and manual or non-manual worker councillors.

CHAPTER VIII

Councillors and the public

According to our system of local government the councillor represents the public interest in the deliberations and activities of the council. If then we look at the relationship between the public and the councillor, we might expect to find indications of the extent to which the system is meeting the purpose for which it exists. Certainly it is to the actual operation of the council that we would have to look if we wanted to learn how *efficient* the official staff of the council were in carrying out their responsibilities and the extent to which needs were met. But this is not the subject of the Maud Committee's work. It is concerned rather with the public setting in which council work is done and the way in which the arrangement of the councillors' part in the work affects those who do or might participate in it. In this chapter, then, we consider some aspects of the mutual relationships of councillor and elector.

The electors and the council

In the first place councillors were asked what they thought was the attitude of the public to the *work of the council* in their areas. The answers are shown in Table 8.1. On the whole, a majority of councillors take the view that the

TABLE 8.1
'How would you describe the attitude of the general public to the work of the
council in this area?' — by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metro- politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Public Attitude is:						
Favourable .. .	53	44	44	33	54	60
Unfavourable .. .	5	1	3	2	9	2
Not interested .. .	39	53	47	65	36	33
Don't know .. .	2	—	5	—	1	4
Not answered .. .	1	2	1	—	—	1
Total .. . (Numbers) .. .	100 (1,235)	100 (152)	100 (134)	100 (46)	100 (483)	100 (420)
Proportion not op- posed at last election .. .	38	38(2)	9(4)	3(5)	22(3)	69(1)
Proportion spend- ing less than 5 hrs per month with electors .. .	42	40(3)	25(5)	47(2)	37(4)	58(1)

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public is favourably inclined towards council work. It will be seen that metropolitan borough councillors were more inclined than others to believe that the public is not interested, whereas rural district councillors are more likely to think that the public takes a favourable view of the work of their authorities. Next to the metropolitan borough councillors, it is the county councillors who are most inclined to say that the public is not interested.

There does not appear to be any close relationship between the attitudes expressed by councillors and the extent of their contact with electors. In the rural districts a high proportion did not fight an election, and also spend relatively little time with electors. Rural district councillors are less likely to say that the public is not interested, despite this limited contact. Most county borough councillors had to fight an election and they spend relatively more time with electors than other councillors do, yet their views on the attitude of electors are intermediate. It may be that more contact councillors have with electors the more uncertain they are about the attitudes of electors.

In the electors' survey informants were asked to say how they thought their councillors 'ran things' in their area (Table 8.2). Although 90% of electors gave a positive response, the overall reaction was not enthusiastic and many electors would not even venture a guess at the efficiency of county councils. Councillors' judgement that the degree of very critical comment is small is confirmed by the electors' response and it may be, too, that the judgement of councillors that substantial proportions of electors are 'not interested' is in line with the only limited approval given by 62% of all electors.

TABLE 8.2
Electors' opinions of their own council

		Opinions of	
		The borough/ district council	The county council
		%	%
Informants thinking their council runs things:			
Very well	.. .. .. .. ..	28	23
Fairly well	.. .. .. .. ..	62	52
Not at all well	.. .. .. .. ..	6	4
Don't know	.. .. .. .. ..	4	21
Total (Numbers)	.. .. .. .. ..	100 (2,184)	100 (1,555)*

*Excludes people living in county boroughs.

Younger electors were much *less* likely than older ones to think that councils 'ran things very well'. Electors' satisfaction with different services ranged from over 80% of users of clinics and libraries who were 'very satisfied' to 65% of users 'very satisfied' with schools and 48% of users 'very satisfied' with public housing.

Councillors and the public

The more 'activist' councillors were less likely than others to believe that the public attitude was favourable (Table 8.3).

TABLE 8.3

‘How would you describe the attitude of the general public to the work of the council in this area?’ — by ‘Is enough being done by council to help people and improve things in this area?’

Public attitude is:	Total	Enough being done	More should be done	Enough in some ways more should be done in others
	%	%	%	%
Favourable	53	62	42	43
Unfavourable	5	3	7	5
Not interested	39	33	46	47
Don't know	2	1	4	5
Not answered	1	1	1	—
Total (Numbers)	100 (1,235)	100 (666)	100 (414)	100 (136)

(The total of 1,235 includes 19 informants who did not state whether enough was being done by council to help people and improve things in the area.)

Councillors with some form of further education were also less likely than others to believe that the public attitude was favourable (Table 8.4).

TABLE 8.4

‘How would you describe the attitude of the general public to the work of the council in this area?’ — by education

Public attitude is:	Total	Elementary	Secondary	Further
	%	%	%	%
Favourable	53	56	55	39
Unfavourable	5	4	2	12
Not interested	39	35	41	48
Don't know	2	4	2	1
Not answered	1	1	—	—
Total (Numbers)	100 (1,235)	100 (518)	100 (467)	100 (216)

(The total of 1,235 includes 34 informants who did not give their education.)

In Table 8.3 we showed how *councillors'* attitudes towards the work of their council varies with their own attitude towards the work. The table below shows how *electors'* views on the work of the council compares with those of councillors.

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Councillors: 'Is enough being done by council to help people and improve things in this area or should more be done?'

	Total	Counties	County boroughs	Metro- politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
More should be done	% 34	% 32	% 46	% 52	% 37	% 24
Enough is being done in some fields, more is needed in others	11	13	17	9	12	8
Total ..	45	45	63	61	49	32

Electors: 'In your opinion is enough being done to help people and improve things in this area or should more be done?'

	Total	County boroughs	Metro- politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
More should be done	56%	61%	49%	55%	55%

In general, electors are more likely than councillors to feel that more council activity is needed, but there is not a major difference between them on this issue. But there are larger differences between the views of councillors in different types of area than there are between electors in the different areas. The sentiments of county borough councillors seem closer to those of their electors than is the case in other types of area, and in rural districts electors are much keener than councillors on extending council activities.

All councillors were also asked to say which one problem in their opinion would need a great deal of attention in future, and their answers have been given elsewhere. A similar question was put to those electors who thought that 'more should be done' by councils. In Table 8.5 below, the two sets of responses are compared. It should be noted that all councillors were asked to name one problem, whether or not they thought more activity in general was needed. They presumably chose those which, in their opinion, were most deserving of more attention than they had so far had. Only those electors who wanted more activity in general were asked the question, and the views given below are therefore those of the *more interested section* of the public. Many of them mentioned more than one item.

Councillors and the public

TABLE 8.5

Councillors' Q: 'One problem in the area which will need a great deal of attention in next year or so?'

Electors' Q: 'What should be done to help people and improve things in the area?'

	All Councillors	Electors thinking more should be done	All Electors
Town Planning	22	%	%
Housing/Slum Clearance/Rents	21	2	1
Traffic Schemes/Road improvements	13	25	14
Traffic problems		{ 12	7
Transport services		9	5
Sewerage system/water supply	11		
Sewerage/Street lighting/repairs		{ 12	7
'Keeping District cleaner and tidier'		6	3
Improving Shops, Bus shelters, Conveniences, etc.		{ 10	6
Education/Further Education	5	4	2
Establishing new industry	4	2	1
Boundary Revision/Local Government Reorganisation	5		
Recreation/Culture	2		
Leisure facilities		{ 24	13
Places for children's play		10	6
Facilities for teenagers		{ 22	12
Welfare Services		6	3
Old people's welfare	2	28	16
Law and order		2	1
Other Answers/Don't know	15	5	3
Don't think more should be done	—	—	44
Total (Numbers)	100 (1,235)	179 (1,228)	144 (2,184)

(Councillors' 'other' problems covered a very wide range of different problems each mentioned by relatively small proportions, e.g., 'new compost plan for refuse', 'immigration', 'keeping rates down', 'extend smokeless zones'.)

Electors' percentages add to more than 100 because some named more than one problem.)

If we compare the two sets of responses it is clear that very different weight is given to some issues. Electors seem far less convinced than councillors about the need for more town planning activity. On the other hand they give very much more weight than councillors to the provision of leisure facilities, particularly for children and teenagers. Both electors and councillors attach importance to doing more on housing problems. Electors are much more concerned than councillors that more should be done about the welfare of old people.

It should be remembered that the question put to councillors asked for only *one* problem needing a great deal of attention. The fact that some problem areas were not named does not necessarily indicate councillors' lack of concern for them. For example it is shown in Table 9.43 (p. 271) that of those who thought council powers were not fully used, 33% said they were not used to provide for cultural/leisure activities.

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It is shown in the electors' survey that, in general, electors are not very well informed about council activities. These indications of where electors think more should be done may not always be based on adequate information about what councils are now doing. But such views can of course seriously affect the public standing of councils and councillors, regardless of whether or not they are well founded.

How do the views of councillors and electors compare on what has been done in the past?

TABLE 8.6

' Which one of all the activities or decisions of the council during 1964 has done most to help people or improve things? ' (Comparison of all councillors and electors)

	Councillors (All answers)	Councillors (Specified activities)	Electors (Specified activities)	Electors (All answers)
Housing	28	35	40	19
Utility services	17	21	13	6
Town Planning	11	14	7	3
Old people's welfare	7	9	9	4
Roads/traffic	6	7	17	8
Education	5	6	4	2
Recreational and Social facilities	4	5	7	3
New shopping centres	—	—	2	1
Other welfare services	2	3	1	—
Other answers	7	—	—	1
Don't know	7	—	—	16
Don't know anything Council is doing	—	—	—	30
None	4	—	—	—
Council has done nothing to help people	—	—	—	7
Not answered	2	—	—	—
Total	100 (Numbers)	100 (988)	100 (1,022)	100 (2,184)

It will be noticed first of all that one-half of all electors said that they did not know anything that the council was doing, or would not venture to say which activity they thought had done most to help or that in their view the council had done nothing to help people or improve things in 1964! At the very least this finding indicates a very low level of awareness of their councils' activities amongst electors. If we take only the other half, the electors who did venture an opinion, we may note that these more interested electors put less weight on town planning activities than do councillors. They put rather more weight on the handling of road and traffic problems. Perhaps this is because such activities provide highly visible results. And perhaps many electors take the public utility services more for granted than do councillors.

Councillors and the public

It appears from these results that even more of the public than councillors estimate do not have either much interest in or awareness of council work. Councillors are, however, right in feeling that only very small proportions of electors are highly critical. On the other hand electors seem to feel more strongly than councillors that councils should extend their responsibilities and there are major differences between the more interested electors and councillors on which problem areas need more attention.

Electors and councillors

So far we have considered public attitudes towards the work of councils. How do councillors feel about their own standing with their electorate? We compare below councillors' views on the attitude of electors toward councillors and councils:

Councillors' opinions:	Total	Counties	County boroughs	Metro-politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Public attitude to work of Council is favourable	53	44	44	33	54	60
Public attitude towards Councillors is favourable	67	57	53	50	67	77
Public is not interested in work of Council	39	53	47	65	36	33
Public is not interested in Councillors	27	36	39	46	25	20

All types of councillors believe that the public takes a more favourable view of them than of their councils. They also believe that the public is more likely to lack interest in the work of the council than in them.

Comments made by councillors who thought the public's attitude to them was favourable included:

' Most people try to be helpful—the individuals who are most critical are usually those who just can't understand what is happening. '

' If a councillor is doing his job there is a good relationship between him and the electors. '

On the other hand, comments about the public's lack of interest included:

' The public are not interested except when they want something done. Councillors do not endeavour to keep the electorate informed. '

' There is total ignorance of what the council does. Many believe councillors are paid or that they get something out of it in some form or other and so they let them get on with it. '

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Clearly many councillors believe that the public does not hold them in high esteem. How true is this? In the electors' survey people were asked if they agreed or disagreed with a series of propositions about why people become councillors (Table 8.7).

TABLE 8.7
What electors think motivates people to become councillors

	Agree	Disagree	Other or Don't Know	Total	Nos.
				%	%
Suggested Motivations					
1) Because they feel a sense of duty to their fellow citizens	76	16	8	100	2,184
2) Because they have the good of the community at heart	74	16	10	100	2,184
3) Because they want to make money for themselves	25	66	9	100	2,184
4) Because they want higher positions at work	34	55	11	100	2,184
5) Because they want people to look up to them	50	42	8	100	2,184

The report on the electors' survey assembles these judgements into an index on the basis of a scoring system ranging from 5 (for those who give councillors credit for altruistic motives on all of the items) to 1 (for those who had credited councillors with selfish motives in every case). The distribution of scores for the whole sample is as follows:

Low	1	8	No positive answers 1 positive answer 2 or 3 positive answers 4 positive answers 5 positive answers
	2	11	
	3	32	
	4	22	
	5	27	
<hr/> 100%			

Note: Those who gave 'don't know' or 'other' answers (between 8-11% of the sample for any one statement) were considered as *not* giving a positive answer.

The report comments that 'people on the whole are more likely to credit councillors with "good" rather than "bad" motives. Those with high scores, i.e. the more favourable, were somewhat more likely to be younger people; a high score was directly related to awareness that council work is unpaid; there was no relationship between electors' attitudes to councillors and whether or not they had ever been in touch with one of their own local councillors'.

Councillors and the public

While the majority of all types of councillors believed that the public took a favourable view of them, councillors with further education and younger councillors were more likely than others to feel that the public took an unfavourable view of them or was 'not interested'.

Communications with the electorate

Councillors' views on the attitudes of the public towards them and their work will be based on information from many sources, only some of which will represent the 'man in the street'. In addition, the activities of special interest groups and the reports of council officials will play their part. It is generally assumed that in a democratic system representatives act on more or less direct knowledge of the needs and attitudes of their public. Since council services are growing and becoming more concerned with the personal welfare of many sections of the public, the range of knowledge needed to warrant such assumptions grows ever wider. We therefore thought it would be useful to ask all councillors in which ways they found out about the needs and attitudes of the public. Table 8.8 shows that much the largest channel of communication

TABLE 8.8

'What are the main ways you get to know about the needs and attitudes of members of the public?'

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metro- politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Informal personal contacts .. .	88	86	85	83	88	91
Formal approaches /letters .. .	31	30	40	30	31	29
Meeting people through voluntary organisations .. .	23	21	22	26	27	17
Political parties .. .	13	16	22	28	19	1
Special organisation set up for the purpose .. .	8	5	19	20	6	6
Local press .. .	8	10	13	17	9	4
Election campaigns/canvassing	8	9	16	11	8	5
Reports from council departments .. .	5	3	2	11	6	4
Through other councillors .. .	4	7	—	4	2	6
Other answers .. .	5	3	12	11	7	1
Not answered .. .	1	2	2	—	1	1
Total .. (Numbers)	194 (1,235)	192 (152)	233 (134)	241 (46)	204 (483)	165 (420)

(Percentages add to more than 100 because some informants gave more than one answer.)

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was informal¹. Formal approaches or correspondence played a much smaller part and although the political parties play a large part in the selection and promotion of councillors they apparently played a minor role as a source of information about the needs and attitudes of the public. Election campaigns played a very small part in bringing the candidates information about the needs and attitudes of members of the public, and special organisations set up to provide electors with the opportunity to ask for help or make known their grievances clearly make only a very small contribution outside the county boroughs and metropolitan boroughs. When councillors were asked to name their *principal* source, informal contacts stood out as even more important, and the various organisational contacts were still further reduced in importance (Table 8.9).

It is of some interest that metropolitan borough councillors were more likely than others to say that they met people through their organisational contacts or through political parties. Thirty-seven per cent of metropolitan borough councillors mentioned these means of contact, compared with only 12% of all councillors. Clearly, in the metropolitan boroughs, organisational channels were used differently from the way they were elsewhere. In contrast, only 6% of rural district councillors mentioned these means of contact, and in such areas councillors rely very heavily on informal contact.

TABLE 8.9
 'Of those you have mentioned which is the main way?' — by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metro- politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Informal personal contacts ..	67	69	60	39	65	75
Formal approaches /letters	8	9	8	9	8	7
Meeting people through voluntary organisations ..	6	5	4	11	9	3
Political parties ..	3	2	5	15	4	1
Special organisation set up for the purpose	3	1	8	11	2	2
Local press	1	3	1	—	1	—
Election campaigns/ canvassing	2	2	4	7	4	—
Reports from council departments	2	1	2	4	1	2
Through other councillors ..	2	2	—	—	1	5
Other answers ..	1	1	3	2	2	—
Not answered ..	5	5	5	2	3	5
Total .. (Numbers)	100 (1,235)	100 (152)	100 (134)	100 (46)	100 (483)	100 (420)

¹I.e. contacts arising out of casual meetings and not arranged beforehand by correspondence or appointment.

Councillors and the public

It was perhaps to be expected that the main groups—majority and leading opposition—in council would make use of various organisational contacts but even amongst members of such groups informal means dominate:

Main way of getting to know about needs and attitudes of public —
by type of group on council

	Total	Majority group	Main opposition group	Other group	Independent
	%	%	%	%	%
Informal	67	61	53	80	78
Other councillors	2	—	5	—	4
Voluntary organisations, political parties or special organisations	12	17	21	6	5

There is, too, some difference in the extent to which organisational channels are used among our four socio-economic groups:

Main way of getting to know about needs and attitudes of public —
by socio-economic group

	Total	Employers and man- agers with 25 or more subordin- ates & profes- sion- als	Employers and man- agers with under 25 subordin- ates and farmers	Non-man- ual & own account non- profes- sion- als	Manual and agricul- tural workers
	%	%	%	%	%
Informal	67	64	74	64	66
Other councillors	2	—	4	2	—
Voluntary organisations, political parties or special organisations	12	20	5	15	21

The preceding paragraphs describe the kind of channels through which councillors' contacts with electors are made. This information does not give a picture of how *much* each of the channels is used or how much contact there is, in total, between councillors and the public. Some questions were asked of both councillors and electors in order to find this out. The information given by electors is presented in the report on the electors' survey.

There are, however, some limitations on the utility of the information collected from councillors. Inspection of the results suggests that the questions asked of councillors were somewhat ambiguous. We asked councillors in the interview:

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'During the last 4 weeks how many of the people in this area have been in touch with you as a member of the council?' The results are shown in Table 8.10.

TABLE 8.10

'During the last 4 weeks, how many of the people in this area have been in touch with you as a member of council?' and 'How much time do you spend per month dealing with electors' problems?'

	Average number of contacts (per 4 weeks)	Average time spent on contacts (hrs. per 4 weeks)
Total	26	7.5
Council type:		
Counties	27	7.9
County Boroughs	36	11.3
Metropolitan Boroughs	26	7.9
Municipal Boroughs and Urban Districts	30	8.7
Rural Districts	18	4.7
Age:		
Under 45	24	7.4
45-64	27	7.6
65 and over	24	7.3
Socio-economic group:		
Employers and managers with 25 or more subordinates, and professionals	25	6.3
Employers and managers with under 25 subordinates and farmers	20	5.8
Non-manual and own account non-pro- fessionals	31	8.4
Manual and agricultural workers	39	11.2
Status on council:		
Councillors (unopposed)	19	5.7
Councillors (opposed)	32	8.3
Aldermen	33	8.6

The time shown in the right-hand column is derived from information collected in the postal survey and already presented in an earlier chapter. It will be seen that there is a fairly close correspondence between the time councillors say they spend 'dealing with electors' problems' in the average month and the number of people they say 'have been in touch with them' during the previous four weeks. Those groups of councillors who claim to have been in touch, on average, with larger numbers of electors, such as county borough councillors and manual worker councillors, also say they have spent, on average, more time with electors. And those groups of councillors who say they have been in touch with relatively few electors such as rural district councillors and those councillors who were returned unopposed spend, on average, much less time than others on this work.

Some councillors acknowledged that they had few personal contacts with electors (Table 8.11). Ten per cent of all councillors said that 'during the last

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4 weeks' they had seen (i.e. been in touch with electors in their role of councillor) no electors, and another 20% had seen only 1-4 electors during that time. Nearly a third of all councillors, then, said they had seen fewer than one elector a week during the previous four weeks. Two-thirds of all rural district councillors and 46% of all county councillors had seen 8 or fewer electors in that time, or less than 2 a week. About one-third of the employers and managers in large and small business had seen less than one elector a week.

TABLE 8.11

'During the last 4 weeks how many of the people in this area have been in touch with you as a member of council?' — by council type

	Total	Counties	County boroughs	Metro- politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
No contacts ..	% 10	% 15	% 5	% 13	% 6	% 15
1-4 contacts ..	20	15	11	17	18	26
5-8 contacts ..	18	16	12	9	17	23
9-12 contacts ..	9	8	10	15	9	8
13 or more ..	40	42	58	44	47	27
Not answered ..	3	4	4	2	3	1
Total .. (Numbers)	100 (1,235)	100 (152)	100 (134)	100 (46)	100 (483)	100 (420)
Average number of contacts with electors in four weeks ***	26	27	36	26	30	18

More detailed analysis of the numbers of electors with whom contact was claimed shows that as the average number of contacts increases so does the proportion of councillors who claim to have seen large numbers increase. Twenty-seven per cent of county borough councillors, for example, claim to have seen 50 or more electors per month and considerable numbers of them well over 100 or more electors per month. Altogether, amongst county borough councillors, 80% of all contacts were made by about 12% of all councillors. When we look at the ways in which these large numbers of elector contacts were made we find, amongst the county borough councillors, that about 40% of them were made not by telephone, postal communication or personal visit but in 'other ways'. Our electors' survey, however, showed that only 3% of electors claimed to have been in touch with their councillors in ways other than personal visit, letter or telephone, and the last three means were used by up to 17% of all electors. It seems clear from this information that considerable proportions of councillors have, quite legitimately, included in their contacts with electors, meetings with groups of people and maybe even some public meetings of voluntary organisations. But other councillors in our sample have apparently not done this, and, since our question has not therefore been interpreted uniformly throughout the sample, there must be some doubt about the way the data can be used.

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If, for example, councillors in some types of authority address more meetings or groups of electors than others, and if they include the audiences for such meetings in their electoral contacts, then their average numbers contacted will be exaggerated in relation to other councillors who either address fewer meetings or groups or who have excluded such meetings from their answers. From information given in the electors' survey we can estimate how many electors claim to have made contact with councillors over a month. If we divide this total by the total number of councillors, we can estimate an average number of electors seen by each councillor per month. This estimate is only half the number of elector-councillor contacts which councillors claim. Since such a large proportion of the councillors' estimate is based on talking to groups, and since individual electors largely exclude such group meetings, then the discrepancy between the two estimates may be largely one of definition and not of fact. The time spent with electors which is noted in the preceding table will, then, for some councillors include time spent with groups or at meetings as well as with individuals and the number of elector contacts noted in that table can only be used to provide some order of magnitude and of differences between the groups. The low numbers, and particularly the proportions of councillors saying that they had seen 12 or fewer electors per month, most probably do represent only contacts with individuals. They include *all* the contacts mentioned by 57% of all electors.

In the report on the electors' survey it is shown that about 26% of electors said they had been in touch with their *council* 'in the last year' and on average there had been over 2 contacts for every elector making contact during that time. In contrast to this only 17% of all electors said that they had *ever* been in touch with a *councillor* and not more than 6% during 'the last year' (Table 8.12).

TABLE 8.12
Electors who had been in touch with a local councillor — by council type

	Total	County boroughs	Metro-politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs	Urban districts	Rural districts
Informants who had ever contacted a councillor of that borough or district	17%	17%	5%	15%	27%	14%

The electors' survey report shows similar substantial differences in the proportions of different groups of electors saying that they had *ever* been in contact with councillors. The proportion claiming contact rises from 14% of the younger electors (21-34) to 21% amongst those aged 55-64. Since the older ones would have had a much longer period of time in which to make contact it may be that younger electors are relatively less timid in making contact than their elders have been. Twenty-nine per cent of the electors who are employers and managers in the large firms or professionals claim that they have *ever* been in touch with a councillor compared with about 17% of manual workers.

It appears from this information that, on average, councillors may have some

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kind of contact with perhaps 200 to 300 electors a year. Many councillors have much less contact than this and considerable proportions, especially in rural districts and in the counties, seem to have personal contact with very few electors indeed. Over half of all our councillors had 12 or fewer contacts with their electors in the four weeks before we interviewed them, or less than 3 a week. This informal personal contact will be part only of their electoral contact but will probably provide their main channel of communication with their electorates. The more formal or organisational channels seem, to the councillor, to play a much smaller role in helping him 'to know the needs and attitudes of members of the public'. It does not follow that the information derived about public needs in the ways discussed above provides the sole motivation for council decisions and actions. Many other incentives, pressures or statutory obligations for action will in different ways make themselves felt on the machinery of local government. The councillor's sense of public need as expressed personally by electors will provide part only of his reasons for deciding how he will act in helping to shape the activities of his council.

What does the public know about councils and their work?

The previous paragraphs discussed ways in which councillors learn about the public. What about councillors' opinions of the public's knowledge of councils and councillors? These were explored in a series of questions, the answers to which are displayed in Table 8.13. Perhaps the outstanding result here is that a very large majority of councillors did not believe that members of the public knew enough to form a balanced picture of council work. This is true in all types of councils. Rather more councillors thought the public was informed enough to make full use of existing council services but even here over 60% of councillors did not think the public knew enough to use existing services well.

TABLE 8.13
Councillors' opinions on what the public knows —
by council type

(a) 'Does the public know enough to make good use of existing council services?'

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metropolitan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
Yes	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	37	33	33	22	34	46
No	61	64	66	76	64	53
Don't know ..	1	—	—	2	1	—
Not answered ..	1	3	1	—	1	1
Total ...	100	100	100	100	100	100

(b) 'Does the public know enough to get a balanced picture of the way the council conducts its affairs?'

	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	18	18	18	11	17	21
No	80	79	78	87	81	78
Don't know ..	1	1	2	2	1	—
Not answered ..	1	2	2	—	1	1
Total ...	100	100	100	100	100	100

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TABLE 8.13—*continued*
(c) ‘Does the public know enough to vote in an informed way at local elections?’

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metro-politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
Yes	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	48	44	44	22	47	54
No	48	49	52	76	50	42
Don't know . . .	3	4	2	2	2	3
Not answered . . .	1	3	2	—	1	1
Total . . .	100	100	100	100	100	100
(Numbers for above 3 tables)	(1,235)	(152)	(134)	(46)	(483)	(420)

It may be somewhat surprising, in view of these opinions on the level of public knowledge, that so many councillors felt that the public knew enough to vote in an informed way at local elections. Clearly, in the view of many councillors, participation in democratic elections does not necessarily require sufficient knowledge for a balanced picture of the way public affairs are conducted. The metropolitan borough councillors, very much more than others, believed that the public *did not know* enough to vote in an informed way at local elections.

Are these severe judgements justified? Electors were asked very much the same question about themselves and we compared below the responses of councillors and electors:

	Total	Counties	County boroughs	Metro-politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
	%	%	%	%	%	%
(i) Councillors: The public does not know enough to make good use of existing council services	61	64	66	76	64	53
Electors: I feel I don't know enough about what the council is doing to make full use of all their services	64		65	68	63	66
(ii) Councillors: The public does not know enough to get a balanced picture of the way council conducts its affairs	80	79	78	87	81	78
Electors: I feel I don't know enough to know whether they are doing the right things for me or not	60		61	66	57	63
(iii) Councillors: The public does not know enough to vote in an informed way at local elections	48	49	52	76	50	42
Electors: I feel I don't know enough to use my vote to the best advantage at local election time ..	36		36	48	33	40

On the first issue electors and councillors are, generally, agreed. On the other two issues electors are rather less convinced of their ignorance than are councillors. Even so, 64% of electors say that they do not know enough to make full use of council services and 60% say they do not know 'whether the council is doing the right things for me or not'. Many fewer electors than this thought that ignorance of the council's services or what the council was doing would prevent them using their votes 'to the best advantage at local elections'. This result corresponds with the differences between councillors' views on the third issue and on the first two. A majority of both electors and councillors believe that effective participation in local elections is possible, despite widespread ignorance of the conduct of public affairs, or insufficient experience of the way local services are being run.

There are substantial differences between the views of different groups of councillors on these questions.

More of the younger councillors than the older councillors believe that 'the public does not know enough' on all these issues.

Proportion of councillors believing that:	Age		
	Under 45	45-64	65 or over
	%	%	%
The public does not know enough to make good use of existing council services	79	62	44
The public does not know enough to get a balanced picture of the way council conducts its affairs	92	82	65
The public does not know enough to vote in an informed way	54	52	35

Those with further education, similarly, are more likely to feel that the public 'does not know enough' on all these issues. There is, however, a clear majority of both the older councillors (58%) and of those with only elementary education (58%) who believe that the public *does* know enough to vote in an informed way.

Proportion of councillors believing that:	Education		
	Elementary	Secondary	Further
	%	%	%
The public does not know enough to make good use of existing council services	60	57	77
The public does not know enough to get a balanced picture of the way council conducts its affairs	76	82	91
The public does not know enough to vote in an informed way	39	52	67

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There are no consistent differences between the socio-economic groups on these questions. The manual and non-manual worker groups are somewhat more inclined than the others to believe that the public does not know enough to make good use of council services. But all groups agree by a very large majority that the public does not know enough to get a balanced picture of the way the council conducts its affairs. A majority of the manual worker councillors, however (57%), believe that the public *does* know enough to vote in an informed way.

	Socio-Economic Group			
	Employers and managers with 25 or more sub- ordinates and professionals	Employers and managers with under 25 subordin- ates and farmers	Non-manual and own account non- professionals	Manual and agricultural workers
	%	%	%	%
Proportion of councillors believing that:				
The public does not know enough to make good use of existing council services	60	55	69	71
The public does not know enough to get a balanced picture of the way council conducts its affairs ..	82	81	82	80
The public does not know enough to vote in an informed way ..	56	50	52	38

The longer councillors had served the more likely they were to believe that the public *does* know enough to vote in an informed way. This may be partly explained by the age of councillors, since over two-thirds of those with 20 years' service or more are over 65. But this is not the whole picture. The main division in the following table is between those who have served up to 10 years and those who have served over 10 years, and 44% of those who have served under 10 years are over 55 years of age. The shorter service group, then, includes younger councillors and also others who are more inclined to believe that there is much public ignorance of council activities.

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TABLE 8.14

'Does the public know enough to vote in an informed way at local elections?' —
by length of service

	Total	Length of service in years		
		Up to 3	4-9	10 or more
Yes	48	42	44	55
No	48	55	55	39
Don't know	3	2	1	4
Not answered	1	1	—	2
Total (Numbers)	100 (1,235)	100 (355)	100 (374)	100 (462)

(The total of 1,235 includes 44 informants who did not give their length of service.)

So far in this section we have been concerned with very general views on what the public knows or thinks it knows. In the electors' survey, a much closer examination is made of public knowledge of attitudes towards council affairs. It may be helpful to recall some of the findings. It is for example shown in that report that the electors' 'image' of the local government councillor does agree to a large extent with the description of councillors given in Chapter I of this report despite the fact that most electors (over 80%) have never personally been in touch with a councillor. People in rural districts, it is true, may be somewhat 'less aware of what rural district councillors are like' than those who live elsewhere.

On average, electors judge that councillors spend about 16 hours a week on council work. The individual judgements which are summarised in this average vary widely but then of course so do the actual hours spent by individual councillors. The median estimate made by electors was 10 hours a week which does not differ greatly from the time which all councillors, on average, put into their council work. If we include time spent in and preparing for committees, on electors and on other organisations where they represent the council, this comes to be 42·1 hours on average per month. Electors in the former metropolitan boroughs were more inclined than others to exaggerate the time their councillors put into council work.

However, over a quarter of electors believe that councillors are paid a salary and the proportion rose to over 40% amongst metropolitan borough electors and amongst the younger electors. Over 10% of electors with some form of further education believed that councillors were paid a salary. Eighteen per cent of electors thought the town clerk was elected and 19% the housing manager. Only 28% of all electors were able to name the mayor or chairman of their own local council, and only 3% of those living outside the county boroughs were able to name the chairman of their county council. Six per cent only of electors in metropolitan borough councils were able to name their mayor, and 1% the Chairman of the London County Council.

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Earlier questions referred to in this section discussed the ways in which more could be done to increase the present level of public interest. Why do people, in the view of councillors, know so little about local government affairs at the present time? Councillors who said 'no' to questions a, b or c on Table 8.13 were asked why they thought the public knew so little.

The views of councillors are given in Table 8.15. A majority of councillors think that it is not so much that information is not available but rather that there is a lack of public interest. These opinions are very much the same amongst all types of councillors, although as with all other questions in this sphere, the metropolitan borough councillors were more likely than others to believe that the public were not interested in local government.

TABLE 8.15
 'Why does the public not know enough about local government?' —
 by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metropoli- tan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Does not apply (think public knows enough) ..	15	14	12	9	14	19
The public are not interested .. .	58	60	60	72	63	52
The information is not available ..	10	8	10	9	10	11
Both .. .	10	11	10	6	8	11
Other answers ..	3	1	2	2	3	3
Don't know ..	1	—	2	2	—	2
Not answered ..	3	6	4	—	2	2
Total .. (Numbers)	100 (1,235)	100 (152)	100 (134)	100 (46)	100 (483)	100 (420)

Are councillors right in believing that there is such a great lack of interest? Electors were asked: 'Do you think you know enough for your purpose about the local council, or would you like to know more?' Fifty-two per cent of all electors said that they would like to know more and the proportion rose to 69% of the younger electors (21-34). These answers do not necessarily imply great eagerness on the part of electors to learn more about their council but they suggest that councillors may be too pessimistic. What electors know about councils depends not only on their willingness to learn more but also on their

background knowledge of councils and their work, and on the availability of information.

Electors were asked: 'Have you heard anything about what the council has done in the last month?' Thirty per cent said they had. The proportions were lowest in rural districts and metropolitan boroughs and highest in the county and municipal boroughs. One-half of electors remembering anything about the council mentioned news about housing, town planning or roads and traffic. Two-thirds of those who remembered any such news had read it in the local press. This amounts to 20% of all electors and ranges from 25% of county borough electors to only 8% of metropolitan borough electors and 13% of rural district council electors.

Against this figure of 20% we may set the information on local newspaper readership presented in the electors' report. Seventy-nine per cent of all electors claim to read local newspapers regularly. It seems that only about one in four of the electors who claim to read local newspapers regularly were able to recall a news item about the activities of the local council. If the local newspapers are indeed seen as regularly as electors claim, then the local council news items they contain do not make a very lasting impression on those who are exposed to them. These findings would appear to justify the view of councillors quoted earlier—namely, that the main information is available but the public are not interested in it. Such a conclusion, however, begs many questions. In what form is the news released? How is it presented? Do people buy local newspapers mainly for purposes other than keeping in touch with local development, e.g., for their advertisements of accommodation or entertainment? We cannot pursue such questions here. For our purpose the main fact seems clear. Despite the declared interest of many electors in knowing more about their councils, only a minority at present seems to have found a way of absorbing at least some of the relevant information which must appear in the local press.

Elsewhere in this report we have shown that there are major discrepancies between the views of electors and councillors on the contribution made to public welfare by the past efforts of the council or on the problems which merit increased attention in the future. Electors' views may well be uninformed but such a hiatus can only result from a major failure in communication between the two sides of the democratic process in local government, and a remedy may not quickly be found. Since we are discussing a major institution in our system of government, another finding from the electors' survey may be relevant. Eighty per cent of all electors could not remember being taught anything about local government at either school or college. Younger electors and those with education above the elementary level were more likely to have received such instruction but even so fewer than one-third of the younger electors (21-34) could remember being taught anything about local government at school or college.

How to raise the level of public interest

If, as many councillors believe, the present level of public interest in or knowledge of local government is low, what do councillors themselves believe might be done to raise it? We asked all councillors to say what seemed to them the most useful action to take (Table 8.16).

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TABLE 8.16
One thing which could be done to raise the level of public interest in local government activities — by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metro-politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
Better coverage in press	%	%	%	%	%	%
Establish public relations organisations	15	15	16	7	13	18
Publicity organised by councillors themselves .. .	14	16	22	17	16	8
Publicity organised by councillors themselves .. .	12	11	13	21	13	12
Encouraging/ensuring public attendance at council meetings	10	5	6	7	12	10
Education in schools	8	10	10	2	7	8
Make voting compulsory	6	5	11	7	9	1
Better radio / TV coverage	3	9	2	9	1	3
Extending power of local authority	2	2	1	4	2	2
Don't know: 'God knows' 'while they get what they want they don't take any notice', etc.	21	19	12	17	17	29
Other answers	8	6	6	9	9	8
Not answered	1	2	1	—	1	1
Total (Numbers)	100 (1,235)	100 (152)	100 (134)	100 (46)	100 (483)	100 (420)

It is first of all necessary to draw attention to the large proportion of all councillors (more than one-fifth) who despair of anything being done to raise the level of public interest. About one-third of all councillors think that what is needed is better public relations, publicity, or coverage by press and television and another 12% publicity organised by councillors themselves. Much smaller proportions think that more formal education activities are the answer (8%) or more first-hand contacts between council and public such as by public attendance at council meetings (10%).

The metropolitan borough councillors were more inclined than others to think that any publicity needed should be organised by the councillors themselves and they believed less than others that more education about local government work in schools would be useful.

Summary of Chapter VIII

1. Councillors take the view that, whilst unfavourable attitudes to council work are held only by a few, a large proportion of the public is not very interested in it. It certainly seems at present that the public is not very enthusiastic about council activities, but it is not clear whether this is due to lack of interest in what councils are actually doing or to a major failure of communication between councillors and public which results in the public feeling that it does not know very clearly what the council is doing. Information is available to many through their use of the local press but it has not made much impression on most of those who have been exposed to it. Perhaps because of this there are large discrepancies between the councillors and that section of the public which has opinions on the question of the ways in which council work has contributed in the past to local conditions. All types of councillors believe that the public takes a more favourable view of them than of their councils.
2. The public may not display many overt signs of interest but considerable proportions, particularly of the younger electors, say they would like to know more about council work, and higher proportions of electors than councillors say they would like their councils to 'do more'. This may well be because many do not know what is now being done.
3. It seems equally true that many councillors do not have a large number of direct personal contacts with electors. There is a proportion of councillors who, either on a personal basis or through addressing groups and associations, make some kind of contact with many hundreds of electors a year and this proportion of highly active councillors raises the average number of contacts for all councillors to a much higher level than it would otherwise reach. Nearly one-third of all councillors, however, had personal contact, in their role as councillor, with four or fewer electors during the four weeks before the interview or less than one a week. Only 17% of electors had *ever* met a councillor and not more than 6% had done so during the last year.
4. In view of these limited contacts and the obvious gaps between both sides of the democratic equation it is not surprising that very many councillors and electors feel that electors do not know enough either to make full use of council services or to form a balanced picture of what councils are doing. Eighty per cent of councillors felt that electors did not know enough to form a balanced view of councils' activities. Despite this ignorance, a majority of both councillors and electors nevertheless believed that effective participation in 'local elections' was possible. Younger councillors, and those with some form of further education, were more likely than others to believe that 'the public does not know enough'.
5. Councillors believe that public ignorance is due not so much to lack of information as lack of interest. Many electors (52%), however, had expressed the view in the electors' survey that they would like to know more about their local council, but only a small proportion had heard of any council activity in the previous month; perhaps not more than 1 in 4 of those claiming to read local newspapers.

CHAPTER IX

Why Councillors Leave

In this chapter we attempt to show what kinds of councillor tend to give up council work more than others and why they do so. The findings and discussion in previous chapters have been based on information given us by sitting councillors. We also interviewed a small sample of ex-councillors in order to find out if there were any differences between their circumstances and attitudes and those of sitting councillors. At this point we introduce the material derived from this small survey of ex-councillors, for purposes of comparison.

We begin by recalling some of the findings from Chapter I which show that councillors in the older age groups tend to have certain characteristics more frequently than younger councillors; we should expect people with these characteristics *either* to have come into council work relatively late in life or to stay on the council longer than average. Next, by comparing the data derived from the councillors' and the ex-councillors' surveys we have been able to calculate the rates at which people with certain characteristics tend to leave the council (or 'turnover rates').

We then look more closely at some of the characteristics of one large group of ex-councillors, those with short service.

Turning back to the interviews with sitting councillors we compare the characteristics of those who say they intend to stay on the council for a long time and those who intend to give up the work 'after a while' or in the near future.

And finally we put ex-councillors' opinions on a variety of matters alongside those of sitting councillors to see what features of their experience of council work seem likely to make people give it up.

Sitting councillors—differences between age groups

In Chapter I it was shown that older and younger councillors tend to have certain characteristics more or less frequently. Thus Table 1.8 gave details of the socio-economic group of councillors in five different age groups. To simplify the figures we may show these age differences according to our 'short form' of socio-economic groups (Table 9.1).

TABLE 9.1
Socio-economic group of councillors — by age (males only)

	Under 35	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 and over
	%	%	%	%	%
Employers and managers with 25 or more subordinates and professionals .. .	23	21	21	19	21
Employers and managers with under 25 subordinates and farmers .. .	28	29	40	41	42
Non-manual and own account non-professionals .. .	27	24	17	18	19
Manual and agricultural workers .. .	22	26	22	22	18
Total (Numbers) .. .	100 (167)	100 (538)	100 (890)	100 (989)	100 (687)

Why councillors leave

There is little difference in the proportions in each age group who are employers and managers of large establishments, professionals, manual and agricultural workers. But there are bigger proportions of small employers and farmers in the older age groups. This indicates either that councillors in these occupations tend to come into council work at a relatively older age or that they tend to stay on more than those in other occupations. It was found that 19% of this group had first served when they were aged 55 or over, which was the same as the proportion for all councillors, and so the implication is that they must tend to stay on. Also, the proportion of non-manual workers in the three older age groups is less than that in the younger groups, which indicates either that this type of councillor tends to come into council work at an earlier age or that he gives up the work sooner than average. In fact, 17% of non-manual workers first served when they were aged under 35, compared with 15% of all councillors, and this difference does not seem large enough to account for the different age distribution, so that a larger proportion than average of this type of councillor probably gives up council work at a relatively early age.

In Table 9.2 the proportions of councillors having no formal qualifications who fall into certain present age groups are compared with the proportions also having no qualifications who first served on the council at different ages. The proportion without qualifications steadily increases through the age groups, and is highest (67%) for those 65 and over. For groups by age at which first served the proportion also increases, though less sharply, with age, although after 65 it falls from 80% to 54%.

TABLE 9.2
Qualifications — by present age and age first served

	Present age				
	Under 35	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 and over
	%	%	%	%	%
No qualification obtained (including 'not answered')	21	38	48	59	67
Age first served					
	Under 35	35-44	45-54	55-64	65 and over
	%	%	%	%	%
No qualification obtained (including 'not answered')	38	52	59	80	54

The implication is that those councillors having no qualifications may tend to stay on longer than those with some form of qualification, except that above average proportions of those without qualifications appear to join the council between the ages of 55 and 64. Those who first served when 65 or over appear to be better qualified on average, and may include a number of retired professional people. Such late starters are not likely to put in the long years of service of those who start earlier, and hence there may be a tendency for possession of a qualification to be associated with relatively short council service. However, not all those with qualifications are old or late starters.

Similar analyses lead us to expect that those councillors with only elementary

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education and income below £520 p.a. would include a relatively large number with long service. In the next section we shall be able to test these hypotheses by examining characteristics of ex-councillors.

TURNOVER RATES

There are broadly two groups of people who leave the council. The first group are the involuntary leavers—those who die or who are defeated at the polls. The second group give up council work intentionally—either because their personal circumstances change (such as moving from the area or increasing family or business commitments) or because they become dissatisfied in some way with council work or feel they are too old or ill to carry on. It is this second group of intentional leavers who composed our sample of ex-councillors and it is *their* rate of leaving and characteristics which should be compared with those of existing councillors in any attempt to discover and measure reasons for leaving the council.

We obtained for our selected authorities lists of those councillors who had left the council during the last three years for reasons other than death or defeat at the polls. The total of these lists, suitably weighted to represent correct proportions of each council type in the country as a whole, was calculated as a fraction of all council places. This gave the proportion of council places vacated intentionally. The average rate at which members *intentionally* leave the council, or the 'turnover rate', was found by this method to be 18% in 3 years, or an average of 6% each year. This rate of leaving includes those who left one council while remaining on another, although these people were excluded from the sample of ex-councillors interviewed. Of the names of ex-councillors given to us by Clerks about 7% were subsequently found, in the course of interviewing a sample, to have been defeated at the polls, that is to say, people whose names should not have been included. If this overstatement of the numbers of intentional ex-councillors is taken into account then the true turnover rate would be reduced to just under 17% over 3 years. It is not possible to calculate what the error from this source would be in many of the groups. Furthermore, because the data are also subject to normal sampling errors, the estimates of turnover in groups where the numbers are small and somewhat tentative. We have, therefore, felt it best to keep the original 3-year turnover rate of 18% and use this as the main reference point for calculations.

In each of Tables 9.3-5 column (a) gives the proportion of council places within a certain category. For example, 12.0% of all the council places in the sampled areas, after re-weighting to represent council types proportionate to their numbers in the whole country, consist of county council places. Similarly, column (b) shows the number of intentional ex-councillors of certain types as a proportion of all ex-councillors notified to us, after necessary re-weighting. Thus 7.4% of all ex-councillors were in counties. It is the comparison of column (b) with column (a) which provides the basis for discussion of differences. Column (c) expresses the number of ex-councillors of a certain type as a proportion of council places of that type. This 'turnover rate' for particular types of council is calculated by dividing column (b) by column (a) and multiplying the result by the average turnover rate of 18%, e.g., for county councillors it is 7.4%

divided by 12.0%, multiplied by $18\% = 11\%$. In column (d) we have calculated the differences between the turnover rate for a particular group and the average for all councillors as a percentage deviation from the average.

This method highlights the differences in a way which almost may be compared with putting them under a microscope. Thus the deviation of county councillors from the average ($18\% - 11\% = 7\%$) becomes in column (d) 39% below the average (7% as a proportion of $18\% = 39\%$).

The turnover rates in the first two turnover tables are all derived from characteristics of the whole sample of councillors and from the information about ex-councillors given to us by Clerks. The analyses by councillors' characteristics set out in the third and fourth turnover tables are based on information given by informants only. Since the sampling errors are likely to be rather higher with these smaller samples, small differences in deviations from the average turnover rate should be interpreted with caution. It is clear that the deviations of +56% for professional workers and +67% for self-employed workers represent an above average rate of leaving the council for these groups, but deviations of the order of 6 or 11% from the average, which are based on rates which are only 1 or 2% above or below the national average of 18%, should be regarded as very doubtful.

With these limitations in mind, it is possible to draw some broad and tentative comparisons between rates at which different kinds of councillors give up council work.

Turnover in different types of council

Table 9.3 shows how the turnover rate varies from one kind of council to another. The top section of the table shows that county councils have a lower turnover rate than the average, whereas metropolitan borough councils have a much higher turnover rate than average. It looks as if municipal borough councillors may have a somewhat higher turnover rate than others.

In the second part of the table we compare differences for each type of authority between the larger and smaller size of councils (i.e. numbers of councillors) inside the type. It will be seen that there is not much difference between the turnover rate of the larger or smaller county councils. They both have a much lower turnover rate than the average for all councillors. Similarly, both the larger and smaller metropolitan borough councils have a much higher turnover rate than the average. On the other hand, amongst the municipal boroughs the smaller authorities seem to have a higher turnover rate than the larger. The situation is the other way round with the rural districts, the smaller councils seeming to have a lower turnover rate than the larger.

If we attempt a generalisation on the effect of size, it rather appears as if these differences noted inside the different types of authorities cancel out each other. If we take the larger councils of all types, as one group, they have the average turnover rate. Similarly, if we take smaller councils of all types, they, too, have the average turnover rate. It looks, therefore, as if the effect of size on turnover rate is limited to some particular kinds of larger or smaller council.

In Table 9.4 we have attempted a geographical analysis of our turnover rate figures. In the top section of the table we have grouped together all the different types of councils in four parts of the country. It will be seen that if all types of

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council are added together in this way the geographical differences are rather small and, bearing in mind the caution expressed at the beginning of this section, it might be said that our figures do not reveal any obvious geographical differences in turnover rate.

All counties in whatever part of the country have a much smaller turnover rate than the average for all councils. The indications for county boroughs, however, are rather mixed. The Midlands county boroughs have a lower, and those in the south-east a somewhat higher, rate than average. Similarly, amongst urban districts those in the Midlands have a much higher turnover rate than the average for all councils, whereas those in the south-western area have a rather lower rate. The Midlands municipal boroughs have a very high turnover, but municipal boroughs in other parts of the country have a much smaller or only average turnover rate. The indication for rural districts is similarly rather mixed.

TABLE 9.3
Turnover of councillors —
council types

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
	Proportion of council places	Proportion of ex- councillors	Turnover rate	Deviation from average*
Total ..	% 100	% 100	% 18	%
Council type				
Counties .. .	12.0	7.4	11	-39
County boroughs ..	10.7	10.0	17	-6
Metropolitan boroughs ..	3.8	5.8	27	+50
Municipal boroughs ..	18.4	21.8	21	+17
Urban districts ..	20.8	22.5	19	+6
Rural districts ..	34.3	32.5	17	-6
Council size†				
All larger authorities .. .	50.4	50.6	18	—
All smaller authorities ..	49.6	49.4	18	—
Larger counties .. .	6.3	3.7	10	-44
Smaller counties .. .	5.7	3.7	12	-33
Larger county boroughs ..	5.4	4.8	16	-11
Smaller county boroughs ..	5.3	5.2	18	—
Larger metropolitan boroughs ..	2.3	3.5	27	+50
Smaller metropolitan boroughs ..	1.5	2.3	28	+56
Larger municipal boroughs ..	8.2	8.0	18	—
Smaller municipal boroughs ..	10.2	13.8	24	+33
Larger urban districts ..	10.9	10.8	18	—
Smaller urban districts ..	9.9	11.7	21	+17
Larger rural districts ..	17.3	19.1	20	+11
Smaller rural districts ..	17.0	13.4	14	-22
(Weighted numbers of council places and notified ex-councillors)	(18,112)	(3,222)	—	—

*Minus percentages represent lower than average turnover rates;

Plus percentages represent higher than average turnover rates.

†Larger councils within each type of authority were defined as those with more than the median number of councillors for that type of authority. Smaller councils were the remainder.

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TABLE 9.4
Turnover of councillors —
geographical areas

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
	Proportion of council places	Proportion of ex- councillors	Turnover rate	Deviation from average
Council type by region*	%	%	%	%
All northern councils† ..	35.4	34.2	17	-6
All Midlands councils‡ ..	16.3	16.4	18	-
All south-eastern councils§ ..	28.7	31.5	20	+11
All south-western councils|| ..	19.6	17.9	16	-11
Northern counties	23.2	24.3	11	-39
Midlands counties	19.6	18.4	10	-44
South-eastern counties	31.7	28.4	10	-44
South-western counties	25.5	28.9	12	-33
Northern county boroughs ..	62.5	58.6	16	-11
Midlands county boroughs ..	12.8	9.3	12	-33
South-eastern county boroughs ..	19.4	27.4	24	+33
South-western county boroughs ..	5.3	4.7	15	-17
Northern municipal boroughs ..	26.9	25.6	20	+11
Midlands municipal boroughs ..	11.0	15.9	30	+67
South-eastern municipal boroughs ..	41.9	40.9	20	+11
South-western municipal boroughs	20.2	17.6	18	-
Northern urban districts ..	38.1	35.4	18	-
Midlands urban districts ..	13.9	20.4	28	+56
South-eastern urban districts ..	28.0	29.8	20	+11
South-western urban districts ..	20.0	14.4	14	-22
Northern rural districts ..	21.2	18.3	15	-17
Midlands rural districts ..	20.6	20.6	17	-6
South-eastern rural districts ..	29.5	34.4	19	+6
South-western rural districts ..	28.7	26.7	16	-11
(Weighted numbers of council places and notified ex-councillors)	(18,112)	(3,222)	—	—

*Registrar-General's Standard Regions.

†Northern, E. & W. Ridings, N. Western.

‡N. Midland, Midland.

§Eastern, London & S.E., Southern.

||S. Western, Wales.

Since the percentages of regional groups are based separately on each council type, column (c) is derived from the regional fluctuation from the particular *council type* turnover, e.g., Midlands counties: 18.4% divided by 19.6%, then multiplied by the *county* turnover rate of 11% gives 10%, which is 44% below the national turnover rate.

Turnover of different types of councillor

In Table 9.5 (2 parts) we turn from the characteristics of councils to the characteristics of councillors. If a group, such as manual workers, is less heavily represented among ex-councillors than among councillors the indication is that councillors in that group are *not giving up* the work as frequently as might be expected. And conversely if a group is more heavily represented amongst ex-councillors the indication is that its members are *giving up* the work rather more often than might be expected.

Rather more ex-councillors in the sample were over 65 and this, of course, was to be expected. What was not expected was that the proportion of ex-councillors under the age of 45 should be so great. Some young councillors, then, seem to give up the work very early. The figures, for the younger ex-councillors, however, are based on rather small numbers.

Amongst the socio-economic groups, employers and managers in larger businesses and professionals have a higher than average turnover rate. However, if all professional workers are considered separately they are found to have a very high turnover rate (56% above the average). The larger employers and managers consequently have only about an average turnover rate. Similarly, although there are only small deviations from the average turnover rate among our other three broad socio-economic groups, it is the self-employed workers (professionals, non-professionals, farmers) who have a high turnover rate.

Workers in nationalised industries or public bodies have a much lower turnover rate than average. Those who work regularly, but under 30 hours a week, also have a much lower turnover rate than the average. Housewives who are councillors have a very low turnover rate. It seems that those who work either in or near their council area have a lower turnover rate than those working at a distance.

Female councillors have a somewhat lower turnover rate. It is in line with the evidence about turnover amongst manual workers that those councillors who have served a full apprenticeship have a much lower turnover rate than the average, whereas those who have had a certain level of further education seem to have a rather higher turnover rate. Those with incomes under £1,040 have a lower than average turnover rate. These figures of low turnover rates for those without qualifications, with only elementary education and with low incomes confirm the expectations noted from the analyses of the age distributions of sitting councillors given in the previous section.

Perhaps the sharpest difference we have found between ex-councillors and councillors is in respect of length of service. It will be seen that 76% of ex-councillors compared with 57% of councillors had served under nine years, and if we take only those who had served up to three years they are represented much more heavily amongst ex-councillors than councillors. A substantial proportion of our ex-councillors, then, served for only very limited periods. The same point is made in a rather different way in the figures for year first served, from which it will be seen that over half of our ex-councillors had only served for the first time in 1958 or after. It must be noted that these figures for length of service and year first served groups of councillors and ex-councillors are not strictly comparable, since it may be expected that, among the ex-councillors who had died and about whom we had no information, many had

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given long service. But this does not affect the main finding that a substantial proportion of ex-councillors have given only short service.

TABLE 9.5
Turnover of councillors — characteristics

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
	Proportion of councillors	Proportion of ex- councillors	Turnover rate	Deviation from average
Total ..	% 100	% 100	% 18	% —
Age				
Under 35	4.5	5.4	22	+22
35-44	15.4	16.6	19	+6
45-54	25.9	21.3	15	-17
55-64	31.0	24.3	14	-22
65 and over	22.6	31.5	25	+39
Socio-economic group (Men under 65 only)				
Employers and managers with 25 or more subordinates and professionals	19.3	24.0	22	+22
Employers and managers with under 25 subordinates, and farmers	34.5	32.5	17	-6
Non-manual and own account non-professionals	20.4	22.5	20	+11
Manual and agricultural workers	21.0	18.7	16	-11
Socio-economic group (Men under 65 only)				
All professional workers	8.0	12.7	28	+56
All self-employed workers	8.0	13.2	30	+67
Type of employer				
Nationalised industry/public body	26.6	17.0	11	-39
Private employer	67.8	75.3	20	+11
Employment situation				
Usually work over 30 hours a week	65.6	72.5	20	+11
Usually work, but 30 hours a week or less	5.4	2.5	8	-56
Housewife—not working	6.7	2.7	7	-61
Retired	20.5	17.0	15	-17
Normal place of work (Those working only)				
In council area	62.5	60.4	17	-6
Less than 5 miles outside boundary	12.8	8.4	12	-33
5 or more miles outside boundary	17.5	22.4	23	+28
Variable	7.2	8.8	22	+22
(Weighted numbers)	(3,970)	(401)*	—	—

*The base for age and socio-economic groups is 441, since we were able to obtain from Clerks this information about some of those ex-councillors with whom we were not able to obtain interviews. Some (a) and (b) columns within boxes add to less than 100% because those who did not give answers have been excluded.

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TABLE 9.5 (*continued*)
Turnover of councillors — characteristics

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
	Proportion of councillors	Proportion of ex- councillors	Turnover rate	Deviation from average
Sex				
Male	87.7	90.5	19	+6
Female	12.3	9.5	14	-22
Qualifications				
None	43.5	47.4	20	+11
Full industrial apprenticeship .. .	9.3	3.0	6	-67
G.C.E. 'O' level, etc. .. .	13.4	16.5	22	+22
G.C.E. 'A' level, etc. .. .	3.0	5.0	30	+67
Teachers' certificate, professional, etc.	13.7	15.7	21	+17
University degree, full medical training	7.5	9.7	23	+28
Education				
Elementary	48.8	43.9	16	-11
Secondary	33.3	38.5	21	+17
Further	15.3	15.4	18	—
Income P.A.				
Up to £520	9.8	7.2	13	-28
Over £520—£1,040	39.3	30.2	14	-22
Over £1,040—£2,080	29.3	41.2	25	+39
Over £2,080	12.5	12.4	18	—
Length of service on council				
Up to 3 years	26.4	37.6	26	+44
4-9 years	30.8	38.4	22	+22
10-20 years	33.1	19.0	10	-44
21 or more years	8.7	5.0	10	-44
First year served				
Up to 1939	7.3	5.0	12	-33
1940-1951	22.2	16.9	14	-22
1952-1957	23.0	27.5	22	+22
1958-1963	36.1	50.6	25	+39
Age first served				
Under 35	15.1	16.9	20	+11
35-44	32.5	28.3	16	-11
45-54	31.9	31.6	18	—
55-64	16.4	12.5	14	-22
65 and over	3.4	9.7	51	+183
(Weighted numbers)	(3,970)	(401)	—	—

Finally, it seems that those who first served under the age of 35 or over the age of 65 have a higher than average turnover rate. The lowest turnover rate is for those first serving between 55 and 64. This is in line with the hypothesis suggested in Chapter IV that middle-aged people may be more motivated to serve on the council than those in older age groups.

The time spent on public duties in relation to turnover

We have shown in Chapter III how the time spent on various aspects of their public duties varies in the different kinds of council and how the average number of committees varies. When we try to correlate these figures with the turnover rates we find that the only correlation is negative. It will be seen in Table 9.6 that the counties and the county boroughs have the lowest turnover rate, that is to say smaller proportions leave in a given period of time. Their members, however, spend most time of all councillors on their public duties, and their members belong to a larger average number of committees than do other councillors. Metropolitan borough councillors had the highest turnover rate of all, but if one excludes the rural districts, they spend less time on average on their public duties than any other urban councillors. They were similarly

TABLE 9.6
Turnover and time spent on council work

	Turnover rate	Turnover rate (ranked)	Total time spent per month as a councillor	Total time spent per month (ranked)	Average number of committees	Average number of committees (ranked)
Council type			(hrs.)			
Metropolitan Boroughs	27	1	46.3	5	4.0	5 =
Municipal Boroughs	21	2	58.2	3	6.4	4
Urban Districts	19	3	55.1	4	6.5	3
Rural Districts	17	4 =	34.4	6	4.0	5 =
County Boroughs	17	4 =	76.6	1	7.9	1
Counties	11	6	67.9	2	7.7	2
Age						
Under 45	20	2	47.2	4	5.3	4
45-54	15	3 =	52.8	3	5.8	2 =
55-64	15	3 =	53.6	2	5.8	2 =
65 and over	25	1	55.2	1	6.3	1
Socio-Economic Group						
Employers & managers with 25 or more subordinates, & professionals	22	1	48.1	3	5.9	3
Employers & managers with under 25 subordinates, & farmers.	17	3	42.6	4	4.9	4
Non-manual & own account non-professionals	20	2	56.9	2	6.1	2
Manual & agricultural workers	16	4	68.2	1	6.7	1
Education						
Elementary	16	3	59.1	1	6.3	1
Secondary	21	1	47.8	2	5.4	3
Further	18	2	45.9	3	5.5	2

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members of fewer committees. The implication from these figures seems to be that the tendency to give up council work is related only in a negative way, if at all, to the time council duties occupy. Councillors who are 65 or over are an exception to this, as they spend more time than councillors in other age groups on their public duties, and are on the greatest number of committees; yet they have a higher turnover rate than younger councillors. This probably points to the fact that it is their age and not their willingness which deters them from carrying on.

There is apparently no relationship between the turnover rate and time spent on public duties for the socio-economic groups, except manual workers, for whom turnover is lowest, but who spend the most time. Any assertion that time is a major deterrent must, then, be looked at rather critically. This does not mean that the time involved in public duties is not a burden. It may very well affect the decision of a substantial proportion of councillors to give up public work and of course, it may play a substantial part in dissuading people from becoming councillors. But, overall, it does not look as if, from the *factual* point of view, time which is spent on public duties has much effect on the tendency for councillors to abandon the work. Later in this chapter we shall show that different groups appear to have *opinions* about the time taken up by council work which may make them more or less likely eventually to give it up for this reason of time. However, the decision to give up council work seems to be related to the time an individual is *prepared* to spend, weighed against the satisfactions and frustrations of the work rather than to the time he *actually* spends.

Short and long service ex-councillors

It seemed to us that it would be worthwhile enquiring further into the large section of ex-councillors who had served only short periods of time, Table 9.7 shows that a very large proportion (44%) of those who had first served in 1958 or later were under the age of 45. These short period ex-councillors were more likely to come from the non-manual worker group, and this is in line with the

TABLE 9.7
Age — by year first served on council
Ex-Councillors

	Total*	Up to 1957	1958 or after
	%	%	%
Under 35	6	—	12
35-44	18	3	32
45-54	22	22	23
55-64	26	35	17
65 and over	27	40	14
Not answered	1	—	2
Total (Numbers)	100 (401)	100 (199)	100 (202)

*These percentages are slightly different from those given in Table 9.5 because they are based only on those ex-councillors who were interviewed.

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high turnover rate for this group (Table 9.8). The smaller employer and farmer ex-councillors had relatively larger numbers in the long-service group, in line with their lower turnover rate. But the manual and agricultural workers, who were shown to have a slightly lower than average turnover rate, had proportionately more ex-councillors in the short service group. This indicates that some of the longer service manual worker councillors have probably put in very many years of council service.

TABLE 9.8
Socio-economic group — by year first served on council
Ex-Councillors

	Total*	Up to 1957	1958 or after
	%	%	%
Employers and managers with 25 or more sub-ordinates and professionals	22	20	24
Employers and managers with under 25 sub-ordinates and farmers	30	37	22
Non-manual and own account non-professionals	20	16	24
Manual and agricultural workers	16	13	19
Others	12	14	11
Total (Numbers)	100 (401)	100 (199)	100 (202)

*These percentages are different from those given in Table 9.5 because they are based only on those interviewed and include women and over 65s.

Table 9.9 shows that the shorter service ex-councillors were much less likely to work in the council area and much more likely to work five or more miles outside the council boundaries than were the longer service ex-councillors. According to Table 9.10 the shorter service ex-councillors were rather less likely to be retired and much more likely to work over 30 hours a week than other ex-councillors. The shorter service ex-councillors (55%) were rather more likely than others (46%) to have some form of qualification.

Many of the differences between the short term and long term ex-councillors are similar to those noted between councillors and ex-councillors earlier.

TABLE 9.9
Normal place of work — by year first served on council
Ex-Councillors*

	Total	Up to 1957	1958 or after
	%	%	%
In council area	61	73	49
Less than five miles outside boundary	8	7	10
Five or more miles outside boundary	22	14	30
Variable	9	6	11
Total (Numbers)	100 (308)	100 (143)	100 (165)

*Ex-councillors who were in a paid occupation while serving on the council.

TABLE 9.10
Employment situation — by year first served on council
Ex-Councillors

	Total	Up to 1957	1958 or after
Usually work over 30 hours a week ..	%	%	%
Usually work, but 30 hours a week or less ..	75	67	82
Housewife—not working ..	2	4	—
Never in paid employment ..	3	—	6
Retired ..	4	7	2
	16	22	10
Total .. (Numbers) ..	100 (401)	100 (199)	100 (202)

Intentions for future council service

Table 9.11 gives answers to the question put to sitting councillors: 'Do you feel that you would like to remain on the council for a long time, to give it up after a while, or to give it up in the near future?' This question was put to all councillors but, apart from the analysis by age and council type, the other analyses were confined to those under 65, on the assumption that the older councillors would be more likely to give up because of advancing age and that this reason might not reflect their feelings about council work. Two-thirds of all informants under 65 intend to remain and there is very little fluctuation in this proportion in different types of authority. The highest proportion (73%) intending to remain on county borough councils is consistent with the finding in Chapter IV that they are the most satisfied with council work. The proportion intending to give it up after a while exceeds that intending to give it up in the near future in all council types except metropolitan boroughs, in which 9 out of the 46 informants said that they intended to give it up in the near future. This probably reflected the impending changes in the London area.

There does not seem to be any relation between the average age of councillors in certain types of authority and their intention to give up. If we take the two 'give it up' categories together the rural districts have the highest proportion (32%), and the second highest average age of 56·6. But the county borough councillors who have the lowest proportion (24%) of those intending to give up are not the youngest, all those in the three types of county district being younger.

If the sitting councillors' intentions for future service are actually carried out, it should be possible to relate these intentions of certain types of councillor to the turnover rates of the same groups. However, the relation between intentions and practice, so far as council types are concerned, does not appear to be very strong. The municipal boroughs and urban districts have rank 2 for the proportion intending to give it up and rank 2 for turnover. But other council types show different ranks, for example, metropolitan borough councillors had the highest turnover rate but only rank 3 for those intending to give up. Three points may help to explain these differences: (a) some of the differences in the figures by council type for those intending to give up are very small, (b) the councillors who come and go relatively quickly may be different from those who intend to stay on, and therefore distributed differently among council types, and (c) the stated intention to leave may be a way of expressing dissatisfaction and not a prediction of actually leaving.

TABLE 9.11
Intentions for future council service — by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metro-politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs and urban districts	Rural districts
Intend to:	%	%	%	%	%	%
Remain for a long time	66	67	73	67	64	66
Give it up after a while	17	15	15	9	17	19
Give it up in near future	13	13	9	20	14	13
Don't know	1	1	1	—	1	—
Not answered	3	4	2	4	4	2
Total (Numbers) ..	100 (1,235)	100 (152)	100 (134)	100 (46)	100 (483)	100 (420)
Average age ..	55.0	59.5 (1)	53.6 (3)	50.8 (5)	52.9 (4)	56.6 (2)
Turnover rate ..		11% (5)	17% (3 =)	27% (1)	20% (2)	17% (3 =)

Table 9.12 shows that a larger proportion of those aged 65 and over than those in younger age groups intend to give up either in the near future or after a while. This was to be expected, but it is somewhat surprising that the figures for the younger and middle-aged councillors are so close. Many of those under 45 will have had relatively short service, but as a group they are almost as willing to 'give it up in the near future' as those aged 45-64. The comparisons of intentions with turnover rate is complicated by the time factor. We should expect those aged 65 and over to have a higher than average turnover rate, simply because of their advancing age, but we have no means of telling how much higher this rate should be. Also the lack of a real basis of comparison between intentions and actual turnover of older councillors means that comparisons within other age groups are also affected. It seems reasonable that proportionately more of the middle-aged councillors intend to give up than actually do give up, because the category 'give it up after a while' will include some who will not give it up until they reach 65 or over.

TABLE 9.12
Intentions for future council service — by age

Intend to:	Total	Age		
		Under 45	45-64	65 and over
	%	%	%	%
Remain for a long time ..	69	70	69	56
Give it up after a while ..	16	17	16	21
Give it up in near future ..	11	9	11	22
Don't know ..	—	—	—	1
Not answered ..	4	4	4	—
Total (Numbers) ..	100 (1,235)	100 (234)	100 (704)	100 (280)
Turnover rate ..		20% (2)	15% (3)	25% (1)

(The total of 1,235 includes 17 informants who did not give their age.)

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The analysis of intentions for future service by different socio-economic groups is shown in Table 9.13. The proportion who intend to remain for a long time varies from 76% of manual workers to 59% of large employers and professionals. It will be seen that the rank order of the two groups intending to give up exactly follows that of the turnover rate. Thus occupation seems to have similar effects on intentions to give up and actual rates of leaving. Since the analysis of intentions was restricted to the under 65s it may be assumed that most of the group intending to give it up soon were feeling some kind of dissatisfaction with council work. Only 1% of manual workers were in this group, compared with 12–14% in other socio-economic groups. This is further evidence, to be added to that given in Chapter IV, that manual worker councillors are most motivated to remain on the council and least likely to be put off by any frustrations they may feel.

TABLE 9.13
Intentions for future council service — by socio-economic group
(Under 65s only)

	Total	Employers and managers with 25 or more subordinates and professionals	Employers and managers with under 25 subordinates and farmers	Non-manual and own account non-professionals	Manual and agricultural workers
	%	%	%	%	%
Intend to:					
Remain for a long time	69	59	69	71	76
Give it up after a while	16	20	13	16	16
Give it up in near future	11	14	13	12	1
Don't know	..	—	—	1	1
Not answered	..	4	7	—	6
Total	100	100	100	100	100
(Numbers of those under 65) ..	(938)	(142)	(346)	(211)	(169)
Turnover rate	..		22 (1)	17 (3)	16 (4)

(The total of 938 includes 70 informants who were retired, had never worked or were in residual categories of employment.)

We analysed intentions for future service by which aspect of council work was preferred (Table 9.14). Among those who liked both broad policy decisions and dealing with the problems of individuals 84% wanted to remain for a long time. The proportion wanting to remain fell slightly to 77% among those who preferred the problems of individuals, and was lower at 61% among those who preferred policy decisions. This suggests that councillors who are involved in both policy and individual aspects of council work are more likely than the average to remain on the council, and that those who prefer dealing with the problems of individuals are more likely to remain than those who prefer policy decisions.

All informants were asked whether there was any one thing which might make them eventually decide to give up council work (Table 9.15). This was

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TABLE 9.14
Intentions for future council service—by aspect of council work preferred
(Under 65s only)

	Total	Policy decisions	Dealing with problems of particular individuals	Both
Intend to:	%	%	%	%
Remain for a long time ..	69	61	77	84
Give it up after a while ..	16	20	14	8
Give it up in near future ..	11	17	9	4
Not answered	4	2	—	4
Total (Numbers) ..	100 (938)	100 (394)	100 (307)	100 (192)

(The total of 938 includes 45 informants who did not answer the question.)

an open question and replies had to be sorted out into a number of categories. Sixteen per cent could not think of anything which might make them give up. The other replies were grouped under two headings, 'personal' reasons accounting for 60% and 'council' reasons for 14%. Ill-health or old age provided nearly two-thirds of the personal reasons or 37% of the total. Old age was most often mentioned by county councillors, who are in fact the oldest on average. The proportion of 'council reasons' for possibly giving up—reorganisation of boundaries, the party system, and other frustrations—was quite small at 14%. None of these 'council' reasons for giving up was stated by more than 12% of any type of councillor, with the exception of those in metropolitan boroughs who (if we can judge from small numbers) appeared to be more likely than average to give up because of reorganisation of boundaries and other frustrations.

TABLE 9.15
'Is there any one thing which might make you eventually decide to give it up?'—
by council type

	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metropolitan boroughs	Municipal boroughs and urban districts	Rural districts
Personal reasons:	% (60)	% (70)	% (65)	% (46)	% (57)	% (63)
Ill-health	19	20	28	4	19	18
Old age	18	29	16	22	15	19
Interference with business or family life ..	14	13	12	14	14	18
Moving from area ..	4	3	3	2	3	4
Amount of time given ..	4	4	3	2	6	3
If became M.P... ..	1	1	3	2	—	1
Council reasons:	(14)	(8)	(13)	(26)	(16)	(11)
Frustrations of party system	4	2	4	2	4	5
Other aspects of local government, or re-organisation	10	6	9	24	12	6
Can't think of anything	16	14	12	17	14	18
Other answers	7	3	8	4	10	6
Not answered	3	5	2	7	3	2
Total (Numbers) ..	100 (1,235)	100 (152)	100 (134)	100 (46)	100 (483)	100 (420)

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Roughly the same proportions in different age groups gave 'personal' or 'council' reasons for possibly giving up (Table 9.16). Within the group or personal reasons, however, there were considerable differences. Only 7% of councillors under 45 thought they might eventually give up because of ill-health or old age, but 31% of them named interference with business or family life, as against 13% in the middle-aged group and only 1% among the elderly. This is in line with the hypothesis that it is among younger councillors that council work has most often to compete with business or family life. Younger councillors were also more likely than older ones to say that they might give up because of moving from the area or the amount of time given.

TABLE 9.16
'Is there any one thing which might make you eventually decide to give it up?'—
by age

	Total	Age		
		Under 45	45-64	65 and over
Personal reasons:	% (60)	% (59)	% (60)	% (66)
Ill-health	19	5	22	26
Old age	18	2	18	36
Interference with business or family life	14	31	13	1
Moving from area	4	8	3	2
Amount of time given	4	9	4	1
If became M.P.	1	4	—	—
Council reasons:	(14)	(14)	(13)	(14)
Frustrations of party system	4	6	3	6
Other aspects of local government, or reorganisation	10	8	10	8
Can't think of anything	16	16	15	14
Other answers	7	10	8	4
Not answered	3	1	4	2
Total	100 (Numbers) ..	100 (234)	100 (704)	100 (280)

(The total of 1,235 includes 17 informants who did not give their age.)

There were relatively small differences among socio-economic groups concerning possible reasons for giving up (Table 9.17). The manual workers were more likely to say ill-health, but less likely to say interference with business or family life, amount of time given. Among those who thought that the council did not make full use of its power, 21% gave council rather than personal reasons for probably giving up, compared with 12% among those who thought powers were fully used.

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TABLE 9.17
‘Is there any one thing which might make you eventually decide to give it up?’ —
by socio-economic group

	Total	Employers and managers with 25 or more sub- ordinates and professionals	Employers and managers with under 25 sub- ordinates and farmers	Non-manual and own account non- professionals	Manual and agricultural workers
Personal reasons:	(60)	(61)	(59)	(61)	(61)
Ill-health	19	14	16	17	25
Old age	18	18	18	20	15
Interference with business or family life ..	14	17	17	13	11
Moving from area ..	4	4	3	3	9
Amount of time given ..	4	7	5	5	1
If became M.P. ..	1	1	*	3	*
Council reasons:	(14)	(11)	(15)	(17)	(11)
Frustrations of party system	4	1	6	7	4
Other aspects of local government, or re-organisation	10	10	9	10	7
Can't think of anything..	16	12	19	11	15
Other answers	7	13	4	9	9
Not answered	3	3	3	2	4
Total .. (Numbers) ..	100 (1,235)	100 (188)	100 (463)	100 (269)	100 (197)

*Less than 0·5 per cent.

(The total of 1,235 includes 118 informants who were retired, had never worked or were in residual categories of employment.)

THE OPINIONS OF EX-COUNCILLORS AND COUNCILLORS COMPARED

Recruitment

We asked ex-councillors the same questions about the process by which they were brought into council as we had asked the councillors. On the whole there seem to be no major differences between the paths followed by those who had given up council work and others. That is to say, the method of recruitment to the council did not greatly affect the chances that the work would be given up. We found, for example, that when we asked the question: ‘Was it your connection with your non-council activities that first brought you into contact with people connected with council work?’, 52% of councillors and 51% of ex-councillors said ‘yes’. When we asked all those who had been brought in because of their non-council activities which of the activities had brought them in, no major differences emerged. Perhaps those who had come into council work because of their connections with political parties, trade unions or other work organisations were slightly less represented amongst ex-councillors than councillors, that is to say, those who came in through these channels gave the work up slightly less often than did others. Table 9.18 shows how similar the recruitment channels were for the two samples.

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TABLE 9.18
How were councillors first brought into touch with council work?

	Councillors	Ex-councillors
	%	%
Through contact with other organisations:	52	51
Political bodies	34	31
T.U. or other work organisations	11	9
Welfare groups, religious groups, recreation and social groups	9	10
Civic and community groups or organisations connected with education, other public bodies	8	5
Not specified or not answered	4	3
Not through organisations but in some other way	48	49
Family connection	9	6
Other private connections	5	4
Already on parish council	7	7
Through contact with other councillors	6	15
'Through work'	2	—
'Ideals of social service'	6	—
Not specified	13	17
Total (Numbers)	100 (1,235)	100 (401)

(Percentages on the left of each column add up to more than 100 because some informants named more than one source of contact.)

When they were asked: 'How well did you know those who asked you to stand?' or 'Why did you think you were asked?', ex-councillors gave very much the same kind of answer as councillors. Similarly, when they were asked: 'How much had you thought about getting on to the council before being asked to stand?' ex-councillors replied in much the same way as councillors.

To some of our questions, however, ex-councillors replied rather differently from sitting councillors and within the sample of ex-councillors there were differences between age groups. Table 9.19 shows that when asked: 'How much

TABLE 9.19
'How much did you know about the work of a councillor when you first stood?' — by age

	Total		Age					
			Under 45		45-64		65 and over	
	C. %	Ex-C. %	C. %	Ex-C. %	C. %	Ex-C. %	C. %	Ex-C. %
Not much ..	48	49	48	58	47	44	47	50
Something ..	27	19	30	23	28	22	24	12
Quite a lot ..	23	32	19	19	24	34	27	38
Not answered ..	2	—	3	—	1	—	2	—
Total (Numbers) ..	100 (1,235)	100 (401)	100 (234)	100 (96)	100 (704)	100 (193)	100 (280)	100 (108)

(The totals of 1,235 and 401 include 17 councillors and 4 ex-councillors who did not give their age.)

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did you really know about the work of the council before you first stood?' ex-councillors under the age of 45 were much less likely than those over 65 to say 'quite a lot'. And those who served three years or less were very much more inclined to say that they knew 'not much' when they first stood than were other ex-councillors.

The longer ex-councillors had served before giving up the less likely they were to admit that they knew 'not much' when first appointed.

When we asked ex-councillors whether they had taken steps to acquire special knowledge relevant to the work of a councillor, considerably fewer of them said that they had taken such steps than did our sitting councillors (Table 9.20). Those who had given up the work, then, seem to have taken less trouble than others to equip themselves to do the work.

TABLE 9.20
Whether steps taken to acquire special knowledge since becoming a councillor

	Councillors	Ex-councillors	
		%	%
Yes	42	22	
No	58	78	
Total (Numbers) ..	100 (1,235)	100 (401)	

In Table 9.21 it will be seen that ex-councillors gave very much the same answer as sitting councillors when asked if they thought that the members of the council on which they sat were a good cross-section of the people of the area. The younger ex-councillors were more likely than the older ex-councillors to say that some sections of the people in the area were not represented adequately on the council. Similarly, ex-councillors who had had relatively short experience (up to three years) were more likely than those with longer experience to say that some sections of the people in the area were not adequately represented.

TABLE 9.21
'Are (were) members of your council a good cross-section of the people in your area?' — by age

	Total	Age					
		Under 45		45-64		65 and over	
		C.	Ex-C.	C.	Ex-C.	C.	Ex-C.
Yes, good cross-section ..	76	72	66	58	78	74	80
No, some not represented ..	23	28	33	42	21	26	19
Don't know	1	—	1	—	1	—	1
Total (Numbers) ..	100 (1,235)	100 (234)	100 (96)	100 (704)	100 (193)	100 (280)	100 (108)

(The totals of 1,235 and 401 includes 17 councillors and 4 ex-councillors who did not give their age.)

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If we divide existing councillors who are under 65 into three groups: those who propose to stay on as councillors, those who propose to give it up in the near future and those who will give it up 'after a while', we find additional evidence that those who come into council work without adequate previous contact with it are more inclined to give it up:

	Total	Intend to		
		Remain	Give it up after a while	Give it up in near future
			%	%
Had never considered getting on council before being asked to stand .. .	41	34 (3)	44 (2)	65 (1)
Accepted almost at once after being asked to stand .. .	70	67 (3)	73 (2)	81 (1)
Family not associated with council work before became councillor .. .	73	74 (2)	63 (3)	76 (1)
Friends not associated with council work before became councillor .. .	35	34 (2)	27 (3)	50 (1)

Some of those who said that they would give the work up 'in the near future' will probably change their minds but the general tendency seems clear. For one reason or another many people become councillors who do not have close acquaintance with the work, and the reality quickly proves to be different from their expectations and their capabilities. They contributed disproportionately to the turnover rate and they are very likely to be under the age of 45.

Reasons for giving up council work

We asked all ex-councillors a series of questions designed to make sure that they did in fact voluntarily give up the work. We began with the question: 'When you stopped being a councillor was this because you were not re-elected, did you resign, or did you decline to stand?' If they replied that they did not stand or resigned, we asked: 'Why was that?' The answers given by ex-councillors to this question are analysed in Table 9.22. Thirty per cent of ex-councillors said that they had given up the work either because of ill-health or old age or because they 'found it a strain'. Most of these had retired through ill-health or old age. Another 32% of ex-councillors said they had given up the work either because of the time involved or, for what might amount to the same thing, financial, business or domestic reasons. Nearly two-thirds of all ex-councillors, then, gave reasons which relate to their personal circumstances.

In contrast, about 21% said that they had given up the work either because of frustration with the party system or frustration with other aspects of the organisation of local government work. About 13% of ex-councillors had given up the work on moving out of the district.

If we consider only the ex-councillors who are under 65, the proportion saying 'the time involved' rises to 25% and becomes the largest single reason given. But 'time involved' and business or family reasons together come to 40%.

A comparison is made in the table of the reasons given by ex-councillors for leaving the council with the answers given by sitting councillors to the question:

Why councillors leave

'Is there any one thing which might make you eventually decide to give it up?' The closest comparison is made when those councillors who said 'can't think of anything' are excluded.

Ex-councillors do not differ markedly from sitting councillors in respect of reasons such as ill-health, tiredness, interference with business or family life. They less often admit to old age being a reason, but this may be partly due to the death of some older ex-councillors, and their exclusion thereby from our sample. The amount of time given seems to be less often in the minds of sitting councillors than it is of ex-councillors.

This indicates that most sitting councillors are willing to give the time to council work and at least some ex-councillors were not. Frustrations arising from the party system or from other aspects of local government organisation are only slightly more often mentioned by ex-councillors. This suggests that although these frustrations are in the minds of some sitting councillors, they may not, in fact, be crucial reasons for giving up council work in many cases.

TABLE 9.22

Councillors' probable reasons for eventually giving up council work, and ex-councillors' reasons for leaving

	Councillors* probable reasons for giving up	All ex- councillors' reasons for leaving	Ex-councillors' (under 65) reasons for leaving
	%	%	%
Personal reasons:			
Ill-health/tired/found it a strain	22	23	
Old age	21	7	} 21
Interference with business or family life	17	14	15
Amount of time given	5	18	25
Moving from area	5	13	16
If became M.P.	1	—	—
Council reasons:			
Frustrations of party system ..	5	8	
Frustrated by other aspects of local government organisation ..	12	13	} 22
Other answers/not answered ..	12	4	1
Total .. (Numbers)	100 (1,044)	100 (401)	100 (289)

*Excluding those who said: 'Can't think of anything'.

Table 9.23 shows, as might be expected, that a large proportion of those giving up because of ill-health or old age were over the age of 65. On the other hand, nearly a quarter of ex-councillors giving this reason were under the age of 55. Those giving up for business or domestic reasons were much more likely to be under the age of 45 (42%) than the average of ex-councillors (24%). Similarly, those who gave up because of the time involved were also more likely to be under the age of 45 (39%) than the average.

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TABLE 9.23
Age — by reasons for leaving council
Ex-councillors

	Total	Time involved	Ill-health/ old age/ tired	Business/ domestic reasons	Frustrations of party politics or other aspects of local government organisation	Moved from district
21-34	%	%	%	%	%	%
21-34	6	8	3	12	6	4
35-44	18	31	3	30	22	21
45-54	23	28	17	3	31	36
55-64	25	33	28	25	18	26
65 and over	27	—	49	23	23	13
Not answered	1	—	—	7	—	—
Total (Numbers)	100 (401)	100 (72)	100 (116)	100 (57)	100 (82)	100 (53)

(The total of 401 includes 21 ex-councillors who did not give reasons for leaving the council.)

Table 9.24 shows that those ex-councillors who had some form of further education were more likely to give, as their reason for abandoning the work, frustration with party politics or other aspects of local government organisation than were those with only elementary education. On the other hand those with only elementary education were more likely than others to give as their reason for abandoning the work business or domestic reasons or ill-health or old age.

It is of interest that employers and managers in the larger firms and professional workers were *less likely* than others to have given up because of the 'time involved'. They were *more likely* than the manual and non-manual worker councillors to have given up because of frustrations with the party system or with other aspects of the organisation of local government (Table 9.25).

TABLE 9.24
Reasons for leaving council — by education
Ex-councillors

	Total	Education		
		Elementary	Secondary	Further
Ill-health/old age/tired	%	%	%	%
Ill-health/old age/tired	30	34	29	19
Time involved	18	18	15	25
Business/domestic	14	20	12	8
Moved from district	13	8	17	16
Frustrated by party system or other aspects of local govern- ment organisation	21	14	24	27
Other answers/not answered	4	6	3	5
Total (Numbers)	100 (401)	100 (145)	100 (181)	100 (75)

Why councillors leave

TABLE 9.25
Reasons for leaving council — by socio-economic group
Ex-councillors

	Employers and managers with 25 or more subordinates and professionals	Employers and managers with under 25 subordinates and farmers	Non-manual and own account non-professionals	Manual and agricultural workers
Ill-health/old age/tired ..	% 26	% 29	% 31	% 31
Time involved ..	9	26	23	27
Business/domestic ..	16	10	13	20
Moved from district ..	17	10	15	2
Frustrated by party system or other aspects of local government organisation	28	21	13	16
Other answers/not answered ..	4	4	5	4
Total ..	100	100	100	100
(Numbers) ..	(86)	(119)	(81)	(65)

When we examine the reasons given by ex-councillors who have served varying lengths of time, we find some differences. Table 9.26 shows that those who have served only up to three years are very much more likely than others to talk about the frustrations of the party system or other aspects of local government organisation. They are much less likely to say they have given up the work because of ill-health or old age. This, of course, is because a very large proportion of the short service councillors are young men. On the other hand, it will be seen that there is not much difference between the proportion of those who have served 4–9 years and those who have served 10 years or more who give ill-health or old age as a reason for retiring. These middle service councillors seem to be much less likely than councillors who have served very short or very long periods to give up the work because of the time involved, but, if as suggested above, time involved and business or domestic reasons are assumed to be partly variations of the same reason, then this difference becomes less sharp.

TABLE 9.26
Reasons for leaving council — by length of service
Ex-councillors

	Total	Years of council service		
		Up to 3	4–9	10 or more
Ill-health/old age/tired ..	% 30	% 9	% 39	% 45
Time involved ..	18	26	7	24
Business/domestic ..	14	10	19	14
Moved from district ..	13	16	13	10
Frustrated by party system or other aspects of local government organisation ..	21	36	14	7
Other answers/not answered ..	4	3	8	—
Total ..	100	100	100	100
(Numbers) ..	(401)	(151)	(154)	(96)

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We asked all ex-councillors: 'Are there any circumstances in which you would stand for the council again?' Table 9.27 shows that about two-thirds of them said they would. But when they were asked under which circumstances they would stand again it appears that for most of them very substantial changes in circumstances would be needed. Only 12% of all ex-councillors (18% of the two-thirds who said they would stand) said they would stand again 'if I was asked'. A third of all ex-councillors said they would stand again only if there was a change in their domestic or working circumstances or when they retired or 'if I regained my health'. Thirteen per cent of all ex-councillors said they would only stand if local government were reorganised. It seems unlikely that more than a small fraction of ex-councillors would stand again.

TABLE 9.27
'Would you stand again for the council in some circumstances?'
Ex-councillors

	%	64
Yes:		
If change in domestic or working circumstances	24	
If I regain my health	5	
When I retire	4	
If local government were reorganised	13	
If I was asked	12	
Other answers	9	
Not answered	3	
No		34
Don't know		1
Not answered		1
Total (Numbers) .. .		100 (401)

(Percentages in the left hand column add up to more than 64 because some informants gave more than one answer.)

About 16% of ex-councillors were still connected with council work in some way or another (Table 9.28). About 9% or just over half of these were still connected as co-opted members. Table 9.28 also shows that the longer service ex-councillors were more likely to be still connected with the council work than those with shorter service.

TABLE 9.28
'Are you still connected with the council in any way?' — by length of service
Ex-councillors

	Total	Years of council service		
		%	%	%
Yes, still connected	16	15	10	27
No, not connected	73	79	73	63
Not answered	11	6	17	10
Total (Numbers) .. .	100 (401)	100 (151)	100 (154)	100 (96)

Two-thirds of all ex-councillors said that they would help the council in the future 'if asked' (Table 9.29). Of these the largest proportion expressed willingness to serve as a co-opted member, but 20% of all ex-councillors said they would 'do anything I was asked to do'. There appears, then, on the whole, to be quite a large measure of willingness to go on helping with council work, even though there is a very qualified willingness to stand for the council. It appears then that many more ex-councillors are willing to help than have actually been kept involved in the work.

TABLE 9.29

'Would you, if asked in the future, help the work of the council?'
Ex-councillors

EX-CONTRIBS						%
Yes:	..	..	..	..	..	66
Would serve as co-opted member	..	..	..	..	..	27
Would do anything I was asked to do	..	..	..	..	..	20
Would help unofficially ..	..	..	..	..	..	10
Don't know in what way	..	..	..	..	..	7
Other answers	..	..	..	..	..	8
No	..	..	..	..	..	31
Don't know	..	..	..	..	..	3
	Total	..				100
	(Numbers)	..				(401)

(Percentages in the left hand column add up to more than 66 because some informants gave more than one answer.)

Working experience

We asked ex-councillors the same questions about their experience of council work that we had put to councillors. About two-thirds of both councillors and ex-councillors thought they had been able to spend as much time as they needed on all aspects of the council work. Those ex-councillors who had only up to three years' service were much more likely than others to say that there had not been enough time for some aspects of the work (Table 9.30). The younger ex-councillors, however, in line with the younger sitting councillors, were much more likely than the older ones to say that there had not been enough time for all aspects of the work (Table 9.31).

TABLE 9.30

'Are (were) you able to spend as much time as needed on all aspects of council work? — by length of service

	Total	Years of council service					
		Up to 3		4-9		10 or more	
		C. %	Ex-C. %	C. %	Ex-C. %	C. %	Ex-C. %
Enough time for all ..		63	64	61	48	62	72
Not enough time for some ..		37	36	39	52	38	28
Total .. (Numbers) ..	100 (1,235)	100 (401)	100 (355)	100 (151)	100 (374)	100 (154)	100 (462)

(The total of 1,235 includes 44 councillors who did not give their length of service.)

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TABLE 9.31
 'Are (were) you able to spend as much time as needed on all aspects of council work?' — by age

	Total	Age					
		Under 45		45-64		65 and over	
		C. %	Ex-C. %	C. %	Ex-C. %	C. %	Ex-C. %
Enough time for all ..		63	64	44	44	60	66
Not enough time for some ..		37	36	56	56	40	34
Total ..	100 (Numbers) ..	100 (1,235)	100 (401)	100 (234)	100 (96)	100 (704)	100 (193)

(The totals of 1,235 and 401 include 17 councillors and 4 ex-councillors who did not give their age.)

Table 9.32 offers an interesting check on the reasons given by ex-councillors for giving up council work. It will be seen that those ex-councillors who had said that they had given up the work mainly because of ill-health or old age were much more inclined than others to say that there was enough time for all aspects of council work, whereas those who gave as their main reason for giving up the work 'the time involved' were much more likely than others to assert that there had not been enough time for all aspects of the work. This does not mean that they had spent more time on the work than other ex-councillors. It only means that they did not feel that the time they had made available was adequate.

TABLE 9.32
 'Were you able to spend as much time on all aspects of the council's work as you thought was needed?' — by reasons for leaving council
 Ex-councillors

	Total	Time involved	Ill-health/ old age/ tired	Business/ domestic reasons	Frustrations of party politics or other aspects of local government organisation	Moved from district	
						%	%
						%	%
Enough time for all ..							
Not enough time for all ..							
Total ..	100 (Numbers) ..	100 (401)	100 (72)	100 (116)	100 (57)	100 (82)	100 (53)

(The total of 401 includes 21 informants who did not give reasons for leaving council.)

Amongst sitting councillors those saying they would give up the work in the near future in fact spent less time on council activities (47 hours a month) than those who intended to remain 'for a long time' (54 hours). Those intending to give it up after a while spent even less time (42 hours).

Why councillors leave

We asked ex-councillors on which committees they thought they had been most effective. Table 9.33 shows that there are some substantial differences between the way in which ex-councillors and councillors answered this question. Ex-councillors (27%) were much more likely than existing councillors (9%) to believe that they had been most effective on committees concerned with town and country planning, highways and roads. On the other hand, sitting councillors (38%) were much more likely than ex-councillors (16%) to believe that their most effective committees were those concerned with trading and public utilities, the protective services (police, fire, etc.), public health or amenities. Perhaps those who have remained councillors are those who are rather more concerned with traditional local government activities (e.g., protective services) than are those who have left. There seems to be a real difference in the focus of interest of those who have left and those who stayed.

TABLE 9.33
 'On which committee have you been most effective in getting things done
 or the right decisions made?'

	Councillors	Ex-councillors
Housing .. .	13	16
Amenities (open spaces, entertainments, etc.) .. .	13	8
Trading and public utilities .. .	9	2
Protective (police, fire, etc.) .. .	8	1
Public health .. .	8	5
Highways and roads .. .	7	10
Health and welfare .. .	7	8
Education .. .	6	5
Finance .. .	5	11
Town and country planning .. .	2	17
General administration .. .	1	8
None, none in particular .. .	14	} 9
On 0 to 1 committee .. .	7	
Total (Numbers) .. .	100 (1,235)	100 (401)

Table 9.34 shows how councillors and ex-councillors answered the question: 'On which committee have you not been as effective as you would have liked to be?' There are no major differences between councillors and ex-councillors except that ex-councillors were somewhat less likely than councillors to say 'none'. When they were asked to say why they thought they had not been effective on committees, ex-councillors were more likely than sitting councillors to say that they had insufficient knowledge of the subject or had not been on the committee long enough.

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TABLE 9.34
‘On which committee have you not been as effective as you would have liked?’

	Councillors	Ex-councillors
Finance	%	%
Town and country planning	11	14
Highways and roads	6	5
Public health	4	7
Amenities	4	4
Protective	4	1
Health and welfare	3	4
Education	2	4
General administration	2	4
Trading and public utilities	1	2
Housing	4	7
None, none in particular, only on one committee	49	37
Not answered	1	1
Total (Numbers) ..	100 (1,235)	100 (401)

Table 9.35 shows that ex-councillors were less inclined than sitting councillors to believe that proper weight was given to all points of view in council deliberations. They were more inclined to believe that either particular individuals or groups had too much power. The short service ex-councillors were much less likely than others to believe that proper weight was given to all points of view in council deliberations. Similarly, the younger ex-councillors (under 45 years) were much less likely to think that proper weight was given to all points of view in council (Table 9.36).

TABLE 9.35
‘Is (was) proper weight given to all points of view or have (had) some individuals or any group too much influence or power?’ — by length of service

	Total	Years of council service					
		Up to 3		4–9		10 or more	
		C. %	Ex-C. %	C. %	Ex-C. %	C. %	Ex-C. %
Proper weight given to all							
Some individuals with too							
much power	14	24	16	29	16	27	11
A group with too much							
power	22	32	25	43	19	25	22
Not answered	2	—	4	—	1	—	—
Total (Numbers) ..	102 (1,235)	102 (401)	103 (355)	102 (151)	102 (374)	102 (154)	101 (462)
							102 (96)

(Percentages in this and the following table add up to more than 100 because some informants gave more than one answer. The total of 1,235 includes 44 councillors who did not give their length of council service.)

Why councillors leave

TABLE 9.36

'Is (was) proper weight given to all points of view or have (had) some individuals or any group too much influence or power?'—by age

	Total	Age					
		Under 45		45-64		65 or over	
		C. %	Ex-C. %	C. %	Ex-C. %	C. %	Ex-C. %
Proper weight given to all							
Some individuals with too							
much power ..	64	46	58	29	64	44	69
A group with too much							
power	14	24	16	39	16	22	8
Not answered	22	32	27	32	21	39	21
	2	—	2	—	1	—	2
Total ..	102	102	103	100	102	105	100
(Numbers) ..	(1,235)	(401)	(234)	(96)	(704)	(193)	(280)

(The totals of 1,235 and 401 include 17 councillors and 4 ex-councillors who did not give their age.)

Satisfactions and frustrations

We asked ex-councillors to tell us how they had felt about their council work, to what extent it had given them satisfaction or frustration. Table 9.37 shows how sitting councillors and ex-councillors answered the question: 'Which one thing gave you most satisfaction as a councillor?'

TABLE 9.37

'Which one thing has given you most satisfaction as a councillor?'

		Councillors		Ex-councillors	
		% (62)	% (49)	% (62)	% (49)
Particular council activities:	.. .. .. ..			
Housing		27		22	
Old people's welfare		9		8	
Town planning		7		4	
Sewerage/water/refuse collection		6		4	
Recreational/cultural		4		2	
Education		3		1	
Health service		3		4	
Street lighting/road safety		2		2	
Child welfare		1		2	
Feeling of Achievement:	.. .. .. ..	(16)		(27)	
Helping others		8		17	
Getting things done		8		10	
Administrative efficiency:	.. .. .. ..	(8)		(11)	
Co-operating with other councillors/officials		4		9	
Financial matters		2		2	
Improving conditions for staff		2		—	
Achieving honours (becoming mayor, etc.)		1		—	
Other answers		8		13	
Don't know		5		—	
Total (Numbers) ..	100 (1,235)			100 (401)	

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Ex-councillors were rather less likely to mention particular concrete activities as a source of satisfaction. On the other hand, considerably more ex-councillors gave rather general answers to the question than councillors. If we group together such answers as 'helping others', 'getting things done', or 'co-operating with other councillors or officials', 36% of ex-councillors gave such answers, compared with 20% of sitting councillors. Perhaps this difference is indicative of something rather important. Are ex-councillors less likely than those who have remained councillors really to have involved themselves in concrete council activities? Or have some ex-councillors tended to forget the detailed activities with which they were preoccupied while on the council?

On the other side of the coin, Table 9.38 shows how councillors and ex-councillors answered the question: 'Which one thing did you find most frustrating or unsatisfactory?' It will be seen from this table that a larger proportion of ex-councillors (44%) than sitting councillors (19%) talked about relations with other councillors or mentioned the difficulties of their relations with officials.

These two results indicate in their different ways how important a part personal relationships had played for some ex-councillors. It suggests that many ex-councillors had not considered sufficiently how well they could manage the many-sided relationships involved in working as a councillor.

TABLE 9.38
' Which one thing do you find most frustrating? '

	Councillors	Ex-councillors	
		% (48)	% (43)
Administrative efficiency:			
Relations with central government/county council	..	18	9
Delays/slowness/inability to get things done	..	16	14
Difficulty of obtaining finance	..	9	9
Relations with officials	..	3	9
Committee system	..	2	2
Relations with other councillors:	(16)	(35)	
Ignorance/apathy/hostility of council members	..	8	21
Party politics/group opposition	..	8	14
Particular council activities:		(10)	(6)
Housing	..	8	4
Traffic/roads	..	2	2
Attitude of public	..	4	—
Other answers	..	10	16
No comments/not answered	..	12	—
Total (Numbers)	.. (1,235)	100	100 (401)

Table 9.39 shows that ex-councillors who had given the 'time involved' as their reason for giving up council work and those who mentioned party politics or other frustrations arising out of the organisation of council work were much more likely to refer to the difficulties of relationships with other councillors as frustrating or unsatisfactory. This seems to suggest a link between dissatisfaction with spending much time on council work and what is felt to be the time-wasting behaviour of other councillors, especially when one does not get on very well with them anyway.

Why councillors leave

TABLE 9.39
 'Which one thing did you find most frustrating?' — by reasons for leaving council
 Ex-councillors

	Time involved	Ill-health/old age/tired	Business/domestic reasons	Frustrations of party politics or other aspects of local government organisation	Moved from district
Administrative matters: (Including delays, relations with central government, difficulty in obtaining finance, relations with officials)	%	%	%	%	%
Relations with other councillors	22	52	39	39	58
Particular council activities	57	21	24	49	36
Other answers/no comments	7	12	7	1	—
Total (Numbers) ..	14	15	30	11	6
Total (Numbers) ..	100 (72)	100 (116)	100 (57)	100 (82)	100 (53)

Ex-councillors were somewhat more likely (46%) than sitting councillors (34%) to claim that their private life had suffered in some way from being on the council. On the other hand, ex-councillors were *not* more likely than sitting councillors to claim that being on the council had affected either for the better or worse their relations with the people they came across in their daily occupation.

Ex-councillors were a little less likely than sitting councillors to agree that being on the council had given them some opportunity of using their potential abilities (Table 9.40). Further analysis not given in the table, however, indicates that ex-councillors are more likely to feel that they have been able to use their *social* abilities rather than their other abilities.

TABLE 9.40
 'Has being a councillor given you the opportunity of using abilities which otherwise you would not have used?'

	Councillors	Ex-councillors
Yes	% 71	% 62
No	24	36
Don't know	2	2
No answers	3	—
Total (Numbers) ..	100 (1,235)	100 (401)

Table 9.41 shows that when asked to compare the satisfactions of council work with those of their daily occupation rather more ex-councillors than sitting councillors were likely to claim that they found their daily occupation

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more satisfying. This may be the inevitable reaction of people who, for whatever reason, had given up their council work. It also implies that they had not tended to find the additional satisfactions from council work found by those who remained.

TABLE 9.41
'Do (did) you find council work or your daily occupation more satisfying?'

	Councillors	Ex-councillors
Council work more satisfying	%	%
Enjoy(ed) both	23	13
Occupation more satisfying	28	26
Don't know	26	41
Not answered, including those who had not worked while on council	—	2
Total (Numbers) ..	23	18
	100	100
	(1,235)	(401)

An attempt was made to find out how ex-councillors felt about the powers of local authorities. Ex-councillors felt very much the same way about the use of existing powers as sitting councillors (Table 9.42). Three-quarters of both samples felt that full use was made of existing powers. However, the younger ex-councillors were much less likely to say that full use was made of existing powers. In this they agreed with the younger sitting councillors.

TABLE 9.42
'Does your council make full use of its power and authority?' — by age

	Total	Age					
		Up to 45		45-64		65 and over	
		C.	Ex-C.	C.	Ex-C.	C.	Ex-C.
Full use made	78	76	67	55	77	82	86
Full use not made	15	16	21	24	15	13	11
Yes in some cases, no in others	5	2	11	1	4	2	3
Don't know	2	6	1	20	4	3	—
Total (Numbers) ..	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
	(1,235)	(401)	(234)	(96)	(704)	(193)	(280)
							(108)

(The totals of 1,235 and 401 include 17 councillors and 4 ex-councillors who did not give their age.)

When asked to say in what ways they thought council powers were not fully used, the minority of ex-councillors who felt that full use was not being made gave somewhat different answers from the comparable minority of councillors (Table 9.43). About 35% of this small group of ex-councillors complained about lethargy or leaving too much to paid officials compared with 21% of the comparable group of sitting councillors. They had clearly to some extent expected more action than they felt had occurred during their period of office.

Why councillors leave

TABLE 9.43
Council powers not fully used—reasons given

	Councillors	Ex-councillors
	%	%
Council lethargic/leaves too much to paid officials	21	35
Financial limitations/fear of putting up rates	15	20
Does not use compulsory purchase	13	6
Councillors do not know what these powers are	7	5
Politics hinder making full use of powers	2	8
No provision for cultural/leisure activities	33	25
Should use powers for welfare and social services	7	—
Other answers (including lack of time, grants should be given, etc.)	11	14
Total	109	113
(Numbers believing council powers not fully used)	(248)	(65)

(Percentages add up to more than 100 because some informants gave more than one answer.)

Ex-councillors did not feel any more than sitting councillors that more powers were needed by councils than they now have. In both cases a bare majority answered 'no' to the relevant question. Rather more ex-councillors than councillors felt that the freedom of local authorities was unnecessarily limited by central government. The younger ex-councillors were rather more likely than the older ones to say that the central government put unnecessary limitations on the freedom of the councils on which they sat.

It appears, then, that on the whole ex-councillors are not more likely than sitting councillors to complain about the availability of or use of power.

Needed changes

It has already been pointed out that when asked if they had been able to spend as much time as they thought was needed for all aspects of council work ex-councillors reacted in very much the same kind of way as councillors. Over a third of each sample thought that *not* enough time had been available. Younger ex-councillors, however, were more likely than the older ones to say that they felt there had not been enough time for some aspects of the work and, similarly, the ex-councillors with very short periods of service (up to three years) were more likely to say that there had not been enough time for some aspects of the work.

If they said more time was needed for some aspects of the work they were then asked 'how could it be found?' Table 9.44 records their spontaneous views and shows that rather more ex-councillors than councillors, though still only a third, were likely to say that the time could be found by changing the existing procedures. Table 9.45 shows how the changes suggested by ex-councillors compared with those of councillors. A much larger proportion of the minority of ex-councillors favouring change thought that a major change in procedure could be the elimination of 'irrelevant speeches and questions'. This would seem to be more a change of behaviour than procedure, but it clearly indicates one of the irritations which ex-councillors felt they had suffered. It will be seen on the other hand that ex-councillors are *not* very much more

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likely than sitting councillors to suggest changes in the time of meetings or the delegation of authority to officials. Fewer ex-councillors than existing councillors, however, would like to see changes in the committee structure or in the size of committees. It seems from these results that amongst ex-councillors taken as a group, and this includes both old and young councillors, the committee system as such was not a major irritant.

TABLE 9.44
'How could more time be found for council work?'

	Councillors	Ex-councillors
By changing procedures	20	32
By increasing total time	71	62
More time not needed	1	—
Don't know/not answered	8	6
Total (Numbers) ..	100 (1,235)	100 (401)

TABLE 9.45
'If by changing procedures, in what way?'

	Councillors	Ex-councillors
Altering existing committee structure	31	23
Changing times of committee meetings	15	19
Delegation of authority to officials	14	15
Reducing size of committees	9	5
Eliminating irrelevant speeches/questions	8	26
Streamlining office routine	7	12
Reorganisation of whole council structure	5	3
Allocating councillors to most suitable committees	2	—
Other answers	13	8
Not answered	17	—
Total (Numbers believing procedures should be changed) ..	121 (259)	111 (129)

(Percentages add up to more than 100 because some informants gave more than one answer.)

The responses just mentioned were spontaneous.

Table 9.46 shows the reactions of ex-councillors to questions presenting some specific proposals. It will be seen that on each separate proposal more ex-councillors than councillors are likely to say that it could enable time to be saved and many more favoured the three changes mentioned than suggested them spontaneously.

Those ex-councillors who claim that they had given up council work because of frustration with party politics or other organisational aspects of local government were less inclined than others to say that time could be saved by limiting 'party debate'. They were, however, more likely than others to say that more detailed work should be left to officials. Clearly ex-councillors were less happy about the *procedures* of council than those who chose to remain, but substantial proportions were not in favour of changes in *existing procedures*.

Why councillors leave

TABLE 9.46

' Could more time be found in any of the following ways? '

(a) Spending less time on party debate?

	Councillors	Ex-councillors
Yes	% 13	% 26
No	84	67
Don't know	2	5
Not answered	1	2
Total ..	100	100

(b) Leaving more detailed work to officials?

	Councillors	Ex-councillors
Yes	% 33	% 40
No	65	56
Don't know	1	3
Not answered	1	1
Total ..	100	100

(c) If each councillor sat on fewer committees?

	Councillors	Ex-councillors
Yes	% 27	% 45
No	69	48
Don't know	3	5
Not answered	1	2
Total ..	100	100
(Numbers for above 3 tables) ..	(1,235)	(401)

On the whole ex-councillors were somewhat more satisfied than sitting councillors that enough was being done by the council 'to help people and improve things in the area' (Table 9.47). The shorter service ex-councillors, however, were much more likely than the longer service ones to believe that *more* should be done. But so were the short service sitting councillors and even more of them (40%) thought that more should be done than did short service ex-councillors (30%). Similarly the younger ex-councillors (up to 45 years of age) were more likely than older ex-councillors (over 45 years of age) to believe that more should be done by the council (Table 9.48). The differences here then relate to experience of council work and to age and *not* to whether people have left the council or remain. At all ages, however, ex-councillors were more satisfied with the situation than sitting councillors.

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TABLE 9.47

'Is enough being done by council to help people and improve things in this area or should more be done?' — by length of service

	Total	Years of council service							
		Up to 3		4-9		10 or more		<i>C.</i> %	<i>Ex-C.</i> %
		<i>C.</i> %	<i>Ex-C.</i> %	<i>C.</i> %	<i>Ex-C.</i> %	<i>C.</i> %	<i>Ex-C.</i> %		
Enough		54	68	49	61	51	63	62	86
More should be done ..		34	23	40	30	37	23	25	14
Enough in some ways, more should be done in others		11	9	9	9	12	14	11	—
Not answered		1	—	2	—	—	—	2	—
Total ..	100 (Numbers) ..	100 (1,235)	100 (401)	100 (355)	100 (151)	100 (374)	100 (154)	100 (462)	100 (96)

(The total of 1,235 includes 44 councillors who did not give their length of service.)

TABLE 9.48

'Is enough being done by council to help people and improve things in this area or should more be done?' — by age

	Total	Age							
		Under 45		45-64		65 and over		<i>C.</i> %	<i>Ex-C.</i> %
		<i>C.</i> %	<i>Ex-C.</i> %	<i>C.</i> %	<i>Ex-C.</i> %	<i>C.</i> %	<i>Ex-C.</i> %		
Enough		54	68	48	58	54	71	60	70
More should be done ..		34	23	45	41	35	19	23	16
Enough in some ways, more should be done in others		11	9	6	1	10	10	15	14
Not answered		1	—	1	—	1	—	2	—
Total ..	100 (Numbers) ..	100 (1,235)	100 (401)	100 (234)	100 (96)	100 (704)	100 (193)	100 (280)	100 (108)

(The totals of 1,235 and 401 include 17 councillors and 4 ex-councillors who did not give their age.)

On the question of councillors being paid a salary ex-councillors came very close to councillors in their general views. Two-thirds of them believed that no councillors should be paid (Table 9.49). Of those who did think that some councillors should be paid, rather fewer of them thought that payment should be made to Chairmen of Committees and rather more thought that payment should be made only to 'those in need of payment' (Table 9.50).

Ex-councillors were somewhat *more* favourable to co-option than were sitting councillors and they were rather *less* likely to think that there should be a limit to the length of time an individual might serve as Mayor or Chairman of Committee. In most other ways their opinions on possible changes were much the same as those of sitting councillors.

Why councillors leave

TABLE 9.49
‘Should councillors be paid?’

	Councillors	Ex-councillors
All should be paid	% 19	% 21
Some should be paid	14	10
None should be paid	66	66
Don't know	1	2
Not answered	—	1
Total (Numbers)	100 (1,235)	100 (401)

TABLE 9.50
‘Which councillors should be paid?’

	Councillors	Ex-councillors
Council chairmen/chairmen of committees	% 52	% 17
Those in need of payment	23	76
Other answers	21	15
Not answered	8	—
Total (Numbers believing some councillors should be paid)	104 (182)	108 (41)

(Percentages add up to more than 100 because some informants gave more than one answer.)

Party politics

In describing the answers to questions about the place of party politics in local government given by sitting councillors, we started by trying to classify councillors according to whether they were associated or not with politically organised groups. Table 9.51 shows that the position of ex-councillors had been very much the same as those of sitting councillors. The older ex-councillors (over the age of 65) were more likely than others to claim that as councillors they had been ‘independent’. Whereas 74% of ex-councillors who were under 45 claim to have been members of a majority group or the main opposition group, 60% of those between the ages of 45–64 claim this and only 48% of those over the age of 65. If these answers reflect reality it appears that the younger ex-councillors were more closely attached to politically organised groups than were older ex-councillors.

TABLE 9.51
Type of group on council — by age

	Total	Age					
		Under 45		45-64		65 and over	
		C.	Ex-C.	C.	Ex-C.	C.	Ex-C.
Majority group	42	42	45	50	41	42
Main opposition group	15	18	15	24	15	18
Other group	4	1	6	4	5	1
Independent	39	39	34	22	39	39
Total (Numbers)	100 (1,235)	100 (401)	100 (234)	100 (96)	100 (704)	100 (193)
						100 (280)	100 (108)

(The totals of 1,235 and 401 include 17 councillors and 4 ex-councillors who did not give their age.)

In general, ex-councillors did not believe any more than sitting councillors that it was essential for candidates to have the support of party organisations, but somewhat more ex-councillors said that the necessity of party support made it 'less likely' that good candidates would be chosen.

The majority of both councillors and ex-councillors thought that the attachment of many councillors to political groups did not affect the main work of their council. Slightly more ex-councillors than councillors thought that some of the work of the council had been affected in this way. Table 9.52 shows that rather more of those thinking that the work 'had been affected' talked of the complications raised by 'doctrinaire policies' than was the case with sitting councillors.

TABLE 9.52
Ways in which council work affected

	Councillors	Ex-councillors	
		%	%
Doctrinaire policies regardless of individual circumstances ..	56	81	
Delay of work because of political discussion ..	7	5	
Decisions delayed because politically inexpedient ..	2	1	
Helps to get clear-cut decision ..	12	4	
Other answers ..	13	9	
Not answered ..	10	—	
Total ..	100	100	
(Numbers saying some or all of the work affected by councillors being attached to political groups) ..	(298)	(126)	

Why councillors leave

Finally, we asked all the councillors a critical question: 'Would you say that on the whole the party system is essential to the work of the council or that the work could be better done without it?' Table 9.53 shows that fewer ex-councillors than councillors thought the party system was essential and somewhat more thought that council work would be done better without it. The older ex-councillors were less likely than those under 65 to say that they thought the party system essential. Among sitting councillors it was also the oldest group who were less likely than younger ones to say that the party system was essential. We may say, then, that whilst ex-councillors are even less convinced of the need for the party political system than sitting councillors, the younger ex-councillors are less likely to be critical than the older ones.

TABLE 9.53
‘Is the party system essential to the work of councils?’ — by age

	Total		Age					
			Under 45		45-64		65 and over	
	C. %	Ex-C. %	C. %	Ex-C. %	C. %	Ex-C. %	C. %	Ex-C. %
Essential .. .	29	19	35	25	29	21	27	8
The work could be done better without it .. .	63	71	59	67	63	71	64	76
Don't know .. .	1	1	—	—	1	—	1	4
Other answers .. .	6	9	6	8	7	8	7	12
Not answered .. .	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
Total .. (Numbers) ..	100 (1,235)	100 (401)	100 (234)	100 (96)	100 (704)	100 (193)	100 (280)	100 (108)

(The totals of 1,235 and 401 include 17 councillors and 4 ex-councillors who did not give their age.)

Councillors and the Public

Tables 9.54 and 9.55 show that ex-councillors were much less likely than councillors to believe that the public took a favourable attitude to the work of the council or to the work of councillors. It was not that they were more inclined to think that the public took an unfavourable attitude, but rather that more ex-councillors were inclined to say the public was 'not interested' in the work of the council or in councillors.

TABLE 9.54
‘What is the public’s attitude to the work of the council in this area?’

		Councillors		Ex-councillors	
		%	%	%	%
Favourable .. .	.. .	..	53	..	36
Unfavourable .. .	.. .	..	5	..	8
Not interested	39	..	55
Don't know	2	..	1
Not answered	1	..	—
Total .. (Numbers)	100 (1,235)	..	100 (401)	..

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TABLE 9.55
‘What is the public’s attitude towards councillors?’

	Councillors	Ex-councillors
	%	%
Favourable ..	67	46
Unfavourable ..	5	8
Not interested ..	27	46
Not answered ..	1	—
Total (Numbers) ..	100 (1,235)	100 (401)

By a large majority both ex-councillors and councillors feel that the public does not know enough to make good use of existing council services or to get a balanced view of the way the council conducts its affairs. Similarly younger ex-councillors and shorter service councillors were much more likely than the older ones and those with longer service to believe that the public did *not* know enough to make good use of existing council services.

Table 9.56 shows the answers to the question on whether the public gets a ‘balanced picture of the way council conducts its affairs’.

TABLE 9.56
‘Does the public know enough to get a balanced picture of the way the council conducts its affairs?’ — by age

	Total	Age					
		Under 45		45–64		65 and over	
		C.	Ex-C.	C.	Ex-C.	C.	Ex-C.
Yes	18	21	7	8	16	18
No	80	77	92	88	82	82
Don’t know	1	1	—	4	1	—
Not answered	1	1	1	—	1	—
Total (Numbers) ..	100 (1,235)	100 (234)	100 (96)	100 (704)	100 (193)	100 (280)	100 (108)

(The totals of 1,235 and 401 include 17 councillors and 4 ex-councillors who did not give their age.)

The older ex-councillors were more likely than the younger ones to say that the public knew enough to get a balanced picture of the way the council conducted its affairs. But even amongst those ex-councillors who were 65 years and over, not more than 39% thought that the public did know enough for this purpose and 59% thought the public did not know enough. Amongst ex-councillors who are younger than 45, 88% thought that the public did not know enough to get a balanced picture of the way the council conducted its affairs. Councillors and ex-councillors of different age groups have rather similar views on this question. That is to say, the view that the public does or does not know enough to form a balanced picture of the way the council conducts its affairs is more related to age than to whether a person was a sitting or ex-councillor.

Why councillors leave

Fewer ex-councillors than sitting councillors thought that the public 'knows enough to vote in an informed way at local elections', and shorter service ex-councillors were most sceptical on this point (Table 9.57).

TABLE 9.57

' Does the public know enough to vote in an informed way at local elections? '—
by length of service

	Total	Years of council service					
		Up to 3		4-9		10 or more	
		C. %	Ex-C. %	C. %	Ex-C. %	C. %	Ex-C. %
Yes	.. .. ..	48	35	42	30	44	30
No	.. .. ..	48	56	55	64	55	57
Don't know	.. ..	3	5	2	5	1	5
Not answered	.. ..	1	4	1	1	—	8
Total (Numbers)	.. (1,235)	100 (401)	100 (355)	100 (151)	100 (374)	100 (154)	100 (462)
		100	100	100	100	100	100
		(96)					

(The total of 1,235 includes 44 councillors who did not give their length of service.)

When they were asked why, in their opinion, people knew so little about local government affairs, ex-councillors gave very much the same kind of reply as councillors (Table 9.58). The great majority of them thought that it was not a question of insufficient information being available but rather that the public were 'not interested'.

TABLE 9.58
Councillors' and ex-councillors' explanations of public ignorance of local government

	Councillors	Ex-councillors
	%	%
Does not apply (public knows enough)	15	12
The public are not interested	58	63
The information is not available	10	15
Both	10	8
Other answers	3	2
Don't know	1	—
Not answered	3	—
Total ..	100	100
(Numbers) ..	(1,235)	(401)

Problems viewed comparatively

Towards the end of the interview we put again to ex-councillors, as we had to councillors, a series of points, most of which had been the subject of detailed questions during the interview, and asked which of them were thought to raise problems for local government. Table 9.59 shows which of these issues were thought by ex-councillors and councillors to raise 'the *most* serious problem'

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for local government. Apart from a tendency for ex-councillors to mention party politics a little more frequently, there are no great differences between the views of councillors and ex-councillors. 'Getting enough good people to stand' was selected most frequently by both samples. The younger ex-councillors were somewhat more likely than older ex-councillors to think that public ignorance of the work of councils was a problem, and they were somewhat *less* likely to think that party politics was a problem. The younger ex-councillors (up to 45), too, were *less* likely than the older ones to think that the time involved with council work was a problem. They are also less likely to believe that party politics was a serious problem to local government. This is consistent with the previous finding noted earlier that younger ex-councillors are *less* likely to be critical of party politics than the older ones.

TABLE 9.59
'What raises the most serious problem for local government?' — by age

	Total	Age		
		Under 45	45-64	65 and over
		C. Ex-C. % %	Ex-C. %	Ex-C. %
Getting enough good people to stand .. .	27 26	25	29	21
Time involved in council work .. .	16 19	14	17	27
Public ignorance of council work .. .	12 9	15	7	7
Getting good officials and staff .. .	9 8	4	13	—
Party politics .. .	7 11	6	13	12
Effects on income or occupation .. .	7 4	6	2	6
Councils do not have enough power .. .	6 7	8	8	6
Bad public image of councillors .. .	3 4	8	4	1
Increasing responsibility/knowledge needed to do work .. .	3 1	1	—	1
Getting all sections of public properly represented on council .. .	3 2	—	1	7
Don't know .. .	2 3	4	2	5
Not answered .. .	5 6	9	4	7
Total .. .	100 100 (Numbers) .. .	100 (1,235) (401)	100 (96)	100 (193) (108)

(The total of 401 includes 4 ex-councillors who did not give their age.)

Roughly the same proportion of ex-councillors as sitting councillors said that they had known people who would have made good councillors but would not stand. When they were asked to say why they thought such people would not stand their replies, however, were a little different from those of sitting councillors. Thus rather fewer thought that such potential candidates would not stand for financial or business reasons (Table 9.60). On the other hand, rather more ex-councillors talked of objections to party politics and the fear or dislike of elections on the part of such potential candidates (24%) than did sitting councillors (12%). Even so 'lack of time' is the major reason for not standing advanced by both groups.

Why councillors leave

TABLE 9.60
If councillors knew people who could have made good councillors but would not stand, what was their reason for not standing?

	Councillors	Ex-councillors
Lack of time	% 32	% 30
Financial/business reasons	26	17
Domestic/family reasons	7	9
Party political structure of council	8	13
Low status of council	4	7
Fear/dislike of elections	4	11
Lack of interest/lazy/selfish	8	5
Other answers	9	8
Not answered	2	—
Total	100	100
(Numbers knowing people, who would have made good councillors but would not stand) ..	(913)	(269)

When they were asked if they knew any people who in recent years had given up council work, ex-councillors answered, once again, in very much the same proportions as sitting councillors and again, when they were asked to say what they thought were the reasons for such people giving up council work, their replies differed somewhat.

Ex-councillors were more likely than sitting councillors to say that such people had given up the work because of ill-health (Table 9.61). On the other hand, rather fewer of them said that such people had given up the work because of lack of time or for domestic and family reasons and rather more of them said that such people had given up council work because of frustrations with the party system or with 'long-winded procedures'.

TABLE 9.61
'If you know people who have given up council work, for what reasons did they give it up?'

	Councillors	Ex-councillors
Financial/business reasons	% 26	% 26
Lack of time	12	4
Domestic/family reasons	11	7
Ill-health	17	26
Old age	14	16
Moved from district	7	7
Frustrated by party system	4	11
Frustrated by long-winded pro- cedures	4	7
Work more demanding than anti- cipitated	4	4
Frustrated/aldermanic or chairman status not gained	3	5
Loss of interest	2	—
Other answers	8	12
Not answered	3	—
Total	115	125
(Number of those knowing ex- councillors)	(956)	(329)

(Percentages add up to more than 100 because some informants gave more than one answer.)

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Party politics, the need to fight elections (and hence to take a political stand publicly) and the actual pressures of council work are, then, stressed by ex-councillors more than councillors as reasons for giving up the work or not taking it on—but only by a minority of ex-councillors. For both councillors and ex-councillors the answers 'financial or business reasons', 'lack of time', 'family reasons', 'ill-health' taken together constitute much the greater part of the explanation for people leaving or refusing to stand for council.

Ex-councillors were also asked which list of issues they thought was 'most important in discouraging people from standing for the council'. Table 9.62 shows that there were no major differences between ex-councillors and councillors on this point. In both cases it was the time involved in council work which was seen as the major deterrent by the largest proportions. Ex-councillors, however, gave a little less prominence to 'effects on income' and a little more prominence to party politics as the major deterrent.

TABLE 9.62
 'What is most important in discouraging people from standing for the council?'

	Councillors	Ex-councillors
Time involved in council work ..	41	39
Effects on income or occupation ..	18	13
Public ignorance of council work ..	9	9
Party politics	7	12
Bad public image of councillors ..	5	5
Increasing responsibility/knowledge to do work	4	—
Councils do not have enough power ..	2	3
Getting good officials and staff ..	1	1
Don't know	2	3
Not answered	11	15
Total (Numbers) ..	100 (1,235)	100 (401)

Summary of Chapter IX

Sitting Councillors—Differences between age groups

1. From analyses of the age distribution of councillors we calculated that small employers and farmers and those having no qualifications were likely to stay longer on the council than average, and non-manual workers to give up sooner. Although the proportion of councillors without qualifications steadily increases with age (which implies that such councillors stay longer) a number of qualified professional people appear to be brought into the work over the age of 65.

Turnover rates

2. The rate at which people tend to leave the council was calculated from the proportion of 'intentional leavers' (other than those who die or who are defeated at the polls) as a fraction of council places. The turnover rate for all councillors is about 6% each year. It was highest for metropolitan borough and lowest for county councils. Size of councils appeared to make no difference to turnover rates, and if all types of council in a region are grouped together no significant regional differences emerge.

3. Turnover rates were analysed by characteristics of councillors. An unexpectedly high proportion of the under 45s appeared to give up the work very early. The large employers and professionals had a higher than average turnover rate, but most of this was accounted for by the professionals. Self-employed workers also had a high turnover rate. Groups having a low turnover rate were: workers in nationalised industries or public bodies, part-time workers, housewives, those who have served a full apprenticeship, and those with low incomes.

4. Those with short service had a much higher than average turnover rate, and over half of the ex-councillors in the sample had served for the first time only in 1958 or after. Those who first served between the ages of 55 and 64 were less likely to give up the work, which agrees with the hypothesis that middle-aged people may be more motivated to serve on the council than others.

5. Nearly half of ex-councillors who had first served in 1958 or after were under 45. There were proportionately more non-manual and manual workers among the short-service ex-councillors than among the longer service ones, and more small employers and farmers among the longer servers. The short-service ex-councillors were more likely to work full-time outside the council area and to have some form of qualification.

6. Time spent on council work seems to be related to turnover only in a negative way—the members of county and county borough councils, who have the lowest turnover rate, spend the most time. Older councillors, who have a high turnover rate, spend more time than younger ones on their public duties, so it is probably age and not willingness which deters them from carrying on. The manual workers, for whom turnover is lowest, spend more time than other socio-economic groups. Thus it is the time an individual is prepared to spend, rather than the time he actually spends, which is likely to determine whether he stays on or leaves the council.

Chapter IX

Intentions for future council service

7. About two-thirds of all sitting councillors say they intend to remain on the council for a long time. One in six intend to give it up after a while and one in eight in the near future. These proportions were fairly constant in all types of council. There seems to be no relation between the average age of councillors in types of authority and their intention to give up.

8. The relation between 'intentions' and practice (as reflected in turnover rate) is not strong, perhaps mainly because a stated intention to leave may be a way of grumbling rather than a prediction. Young councillors are about as likely to intend to give up as middle-aged ones, and judging by turnover rates, it is the younger ones who more often carry out this intention. Proportionately more manual workers and fewer large employers and professionals intend to remain for a long time, and this is in line with the turnover findings.

9. We asked councillors whether there was any one thing which might make them eventually decide to give up. One in six of them could not think of anything. More than a third thought they might eventually give up because of ill-health or old age. Interference with business or family life (14%) was the next most frequent reason given. All reasons connected with the council, such as reorganisation of boundaries and frustrations of the party system or of other aspects of local government, accounted for another 14%.

10. As expected, fewer of the younger councillors thought they would give up because of ill-health or old age, and nearly a third of them named interference with business or family life. Clearly this reason expresses greater dissatisfaction with the burdens of council life, and helps to explain why such a high proportion of ex-councillors are under 45. It is significant that manual worker councillors were less likely to name either interference with business or family life or amount of time given as reasons for giving up.

The opinions of ex-Councillors and Councillors compared

Recruitment

11. The method of recruitment does not seem greatly to affect the chances that the work will be given up. Ex-councillors had come into touch with council work through other organisations or in more informal ways in very much the same proportions as sitting councillors. Ex-councillors in general seem to have taken less trouble than sitting councillors to acquire any special knowledge relevant to the job. Younger ex-councillors, and those with only short service, were less likely than others to know much about council work when they took it up. Many of those who had given up the work, then, were both less prepared for it and had taken less trouble than others to equip themselves for it.

Reasons for Giving Up

12. About one-third of ex-councillors said they had given up because of ill-health or old age and another third because of the time involved or, what might amount to the same thing, financial, business or domestic reasons. In contrast to those two-thirds who had given up because of personal circumstances

Summary of Chapter IX

21% said they had given up because of frustrations with the party system or with other aspects of the organisation of local government work.

13. If we consider only those ex-councillors who are under 65 'the time involved' and 'family/business' reasons account for 40% of those leaving. These reasons probably account for as many as one-half of ex-councillors under the age of 45.

14. 'Party politics' and other frustrations arising out of the organisation of local government account for more than one-third of ex-councillors who have served under 3 years. This group has been shown to be more likely to be unprepared for council work and many in it must also find rather quickly that they cannot cope with the actual conditions of council participation. Another one in six of these short service councillors gives up the work because of moving out of the district.

15. Those who have given up council work, for whatever reason, are in the main unlikely to stand again, though many of them say they would be willing to help the council. Only about one in six are still connected with the council.

Working experience

16. Whilst in general a two-thirds majority of both councillors and ex-councillors thought they had been able to spend as much time as needed on all aspects of council work, the short service and younger ex-councillors were much more likely to think that *not* enough time had been available. They were similarly less likely to think that proper weight had been given to all points of view in council deliberations. These groups (and to a large extent they overlap) were, then, more unhappy about their council experience. They form a large proportion of those ex-councillors who gave up the work for reasons other than illness or old age.

17. The major reasons given by ex-councillors for feeling ineffective on committees was inexperience or lack of knowledge. Perhaps the newer councillors had been too impatient to acquire the necessary knowledge or, alternatively, perhaps procedures for working councillors into council activities are not sufficiently developed to ensure proper integration of the young or inexperienced ones with those more experienced in council ways.

18. The focus of interest of the ex-councillors, too, seems to have been somewhat different from that of sitting councillors. They inclined more to the council interests which have grown rapidly in importance in recent years, planning and road problems. Perhaps these were the subjects on which they would have preferred to work. We have shown earlier that there are discrepancies between *councillors'* personal interests and the contributions of *councils* which they feel 'have done most to help people and improve things'. Planning was one of the fields in which these discrepancies were sharpest. It seems quite possible that for many councillors the difference between personal interests and the actual work of council may have made them feel that not enough time was being put into some subjects.

Satisfactions

19. When we classify what ex-councillors said about the satisfactions and frustrations of council work, we find some differences between the ex- and sitting

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councillors. Fewer ex-councillors seem to have got satisfaction from specific council activities. They were more likely than sitting councillors to express rather general satisfaction with 'co-operating with other councillors' or 'helping others'.

20. When asked about their frustrations, they were more likely than sitting councillors to talk about unsatisfactory relations with other councillors or officials. It seems clear that these personal relationships played an important role in persuading some councillors to give up the work. This reinforces the point made earlier about the importance of integrating new councillors into the work of council.

21. Ex-councillors were a little more likely to claim that their private life but *not* their work situation had suffered from their council work. Ex-councillors were less likely than sitting councillors to feel that being on the council had given them opportunities of using potential abilities and were more likely to prefer their occupation to council work as a source of satisfaction. The devotion of non-working hours to council activities had for some clearly not brought the extra satisfactions or perhaps compensations for the inadequacies of daily occupations which they had anticipated.

22. Ex-councillors do not appear to feel any more than sitting councillors that existing powers were not used, or that more powers were needed by councils. The short service and younger ex-councillors, however, were less likely to feel that powers were used sufficiently and the younger ex-councillors were also rather more likely than others to feel that central government was unnecessarily restrictive. This reflects the greater urge for action on the part of these groups to which reference was made above. If new councillors are to fit into council work more easily they will need to have a better understanding of the limitations under which councils work.

Needed changes

23. Whilst the majority of ex-councillors did not feel that time could be found by changing procedures they were nevertheless more likely than sitting councillors to feel that changes in procedure *could* be made which would provide time for other council activities.

24. It appears that ex-councillors are somewhat less happy than sitting councillors about existing council procedures but not very much so. Whilst many of them would approve changes in, for example, the number of committees on which councillors sit or 'leaving more work to officials' just as many, and sometimes more, would be against such changes. To judge by the opinions of ex-councillors, whilst the feeling of a need for radical change may have motivated some councillors to give up the work, for very many more it was the time taken on council work and its encroachment on private interests that forced them to give it up rather than any conviction that they were wasting time on unnecessary procedures.

25. Ex-councillors in general, *and at all ages*, were *more* satisfied than sitting councillors with what councils were doing to 'help people and improve things in

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the area *. Though both newer ex-councillors and newer sitting councillors would like the councils to be doing more, this relates to age rather than to whether people had left the council or not. It seems from these results that dissatisfaction with council efforts is not, by itself, a major motive for leaving.

26. Ex-councillors do not believe any more than sitting councillors that payment should be made for service as a councillor.

Party Politics

27. We have shown in an earlier chapter that the effect of recruitment to council work by political parties is to bring in some groups of the population who otherwise would be much less represented numerically than they now are. Younger councillors, for example, were more likely to be recruited by political parties. We find also that the younger ex-councillors were more likely to have been closely attached to politically organised groups whilst on the council than were older ex-councillors.

28. Slightly more ex-councillors than councillors thought that the existence of party politics affected some or all of the work of councils but two-thirds of ex-councillors thought that the work was *not* affected.

29. The majority of councillors and ex-councillors of all ages did not think that the party system was essential to the work of councils. 25% of ex-councillors under the age of 45 thought that the party system was essential but the great majority even of this group did not. Although political parties bring many people into councils and clearly must play some part in council deliberations, nevertheless the impression given by what councillors tell us is that the actual work of council is not greatly affected by it and these are also the views of people who are no longer on the council and presumably to some extent freed from the ties of party loyalties. They help to explain why it is that, although most ex-councillors agree with most councillors that the work of local government could be better done without party politics, only a small proportion (14%) cited party politics as their reason for giving up the work. It is not for them the *major* irritant or cause for dissatisfaction.

Councillors and the Public

30. Ex-councillors were much *less* likely than sitting councillors to believe that the public took a favourable view of the work of councils or of councillors. On the whole neither group believes that the public knows enough even to make proper use of council services and they both feel that this ignorance arises very largely out of lack of interest.

31. Does this feeling of public disinterest persuade people to give up council work? Insignificant numbers of ex-councillors cited public disinterest as their main reason for giving up or mentioned it amongst the causes of frustration with the work and yet it seems unlikely that willingness to give up private time in the public interest should not be affected by a felt lack of public interest. But we have seen in earlier chapters that no matter what may be their views on the public, large proportions of all councillors whatever their background or description are putting in very long hours on council work and the overall 'turn-

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over' rate does not seem remarkably high. How do councillors themselves rank the various factors which we have been examining as possible deterrents to continuing council work?

Problems Viewed Comparatively

32. Both councillors and ex-councillors rank 'the most serious problem' for local government in broadly the same way. Both think 'getting enough good people to stand' is the most serious problem and the time involved the next most serious. Public ignorance ranks third for sitting councillors, but ex-councillors put party politics third. Younger ex-councillors rank 'time involved' somewhat lower than the older ones and they also rank party politics much lower as a problem. They rank public ignorance higher.

33. When asked what was most important in discouraging potential candidates both sitting and ex-councillors ranked 'time involved' highest. The effects on income or occupation were next most important but mentioned by smaller proportions. Party politics came next on the list for ex-councillors, though only fourth for sitting councillors. The order, then, is:

What discourages people from standing?		Ex-councillors %	Councillors %
Time involved	.. .. .. ..	39	41
Effect on income	.. .. .. ..	13	18
Party politics	.. .. .. ..	12	7
Public ignorance	.. .. .. ..	9	9
Bad public image	.. .. .. ..	5	5

CHAPTER X

Conclusions

PART I: CHARACTERISTICS AND RECRUITMENT OF COUNCILLORS

How representative is local government ?

Local government is concerned, not only with the wider issues of state, but with more immediate local responsibilities. It seems unlikely that such responsibilities can be effectively discharged unless people with first-hand knowledge of all sections of the local community are represented on the council. We have, therefore, compared our councillors with the population. We find that in some respects councillors differ very widely from the population. Councillors are much older than the general population. Age, of course, might be considered a necessary attribute of a councillor in so far as it connotes wisdom or experience of social affairs. But less than a quarter of our male councillors are under the age of 45 and over a half are over 55. And in an activity so much concerned with the amelioration of family and social problems can the proportion of women councillors (only 12%) be considered satisfactory?

Despite their high average age two-thirds of all councillors are working a full week in a paid occupation. We find, however, that there are some occupational groups which are very over-represented on councils. Thirty-six per cent of all councillors are employers and managers in small businesses or farmers. This is four times the proportion in the general population. Forty-six per cent of all rural district councillors and 31% of county councillors are either small businessmen or farmers.

On the other hand, manual workers whether skilled or unskilled, are very under-represented amongst councillors. The county boroughs and the smaller urban authorities, however, have much larger proportions of manual workers than other authorities.

It is not the case that those with professional or managerial experience do not take up council work. Nineteen per cent of all councillors are either professional workers or employers and managers in large businesses. This is nearly three times the proportion of such groups in the general population and they are well represented in most types of council.

These differences in the occupation make-up of councils are echoed in the educational attainments of councillors and their incomes. In none of our governing bodies have we so far insisted on any educational qualification, but we find that, in general, councillors are better educated than electors and less well educated than M.P.s. The educational system has, however, been changing rapidly and the average age of our councillors is fairly high. So we find that older councillors were much less well educated than the younger. Nearly half of those over 55 finished their education at the elementary or secondary modern level but they also have larger proportions who have continued their education in either correspondence courses or evening classes. On the other hand these areas have smaller proportions of councillors with some form of higher education.

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Although councillors as a group have higher incomes than their electors, the county boroughs and smaller urban authorities have larger proportions of low income councillors than have the counties or the rural districts.

It is clear that the process whereby citizens become local government councillors is very selective, and selective in different ways in the different types of authority. Our system of government does not require that each social or economic group be represented by individuals who share its characteristics and some groups, because of education, training, or qualifications, might be expected to carry heavier responsibilities than others. But the special position of small businessmen or farmers in many councils would be hard to justify in this way and so would the variation in the proportions of councillors in the different occupations or with different educational levels from one type of council to another.

The situation summarised above results from the way the recruitment process in local government works on the social structure and social processes which prevail in Britain today.

It is sometimes suggested that because some groups of the population are more mobile than others they do not have the same opportunity or inclination to interest themselves in council work.

Sixty per cent of present councillors have lived in their areas more than 25 years. Attachment to their areas is especially strong amongst county borough and county councillors. It is certainly true that mobility is greater amongst professionals, the better educated, and the young. Nevertheless in the general population the majority of people in these categories had not, in the last ten years, moved out of their town of residence. If they were interested, mobility in the groups as a whole need not prevent many individuals in them taking part in council work.

Despite the high average age of councillors very large proportions have only short experience of council work. At the end of 1964, 48% of all councillors had first served on their council in 1958 or later. And many of those who had served three years or less on their council were over the age of 55.

In Britain our representative system is guaranteed by elections. How does this method work in the field of local government? Thirty-eight per cent of all councillors were returned unopposed, but 68% of rural district councillors were unopposed and, if we exclude these from the total 20% of all the rest were returned unopposed. The chances of fighting an election seem to fall off sharply once councillors have served ten years. Over 50% of all councillors who are small businessmen and farmers were returned unopposed. The proportion is much smaller for the other main occupational groups. Very large proportions of rural district councillors are small businessmen or farmers who have been returned unopposed.

Nearly half of all aldermen are over 65 and 15% are over 75. Length of service seems more important than any other consideration in their appointment.

Recruitment

The present composition of councils results from an inflow through the recruitment processes and the outflow of councillors giving up the work. We look first at the process by which people become councillors and later at the way in which the work is given up.

Conclusions

It does not appear that family connections play a very large part, except perhaps in the rural districts. Councillors are much more likely to have had friends associated with council work before they themselves were appointed.

There are two main channels through which people are brought into council work. About half of all councillors were first brought into touch with council work in a formal way through their membership of organisations such as political parties and other bodies. This is especially important in the county boroughs and the former metropolitan boroughs. The other half were brought into touch in a more informal way through private connections or contacts with other councillors. This is of special importance in the counties and rural districts.

Political parties bring about a third of all councillors into touch with council work and ask them to stand. They bring in a large part of the younger councillors and manual workers who otherwise would be even less well represented on councils than they now are. Many of the other organisations, however, which play a role in bringing people into touch with council work, such as trade unions or religious, welfare or civic bodies, actually sponsor relatively few councillors. About 28% of councillors came into contact with council work through trade unions, religious and welfare groups but only about 10% were invited to stand by such bodies. On the other hand 35% of councillors were invited to stand by private people or in other informal ways. It is the employers and managers of small businesses and farmers who are most likely to be asked to stand in these informal ways.

The large part played by informal processes seems to indicate that the machinery for actually sponsoring candidates is rather inadequate. This must mean that many possible sources from which councillors might be drawn are not fully used. It must also affect the representativeness of local councils.

Councillors are rather pessimistic about the recruitment situation. Two-thirds of all councillors believe there is great difficulty in getting the 'right kind of candidate' to stand. When we asked what personal characteristics were necessary for a good councillor, nearly two-thirds of all councillors chose as the main necessary characteristic qualities which may be said to relate to character rather than to intellect or training.

Despite their feelings about the difficulty of recruitment, about three-quarters of all councillors in all types of area still think that the members of their council form a good cross-section of the people in the area.

Characteristics and recruitment compared

When we look at the characteristics of sitting councillors and the ways in which they were brought into council work, we see that there is a tendency for some of these characteristics to go together. In Chapters I and II we summarised data on councillors in different council types, mainly in the form of indices made up by adding together related characteristics, such as educational level and income. The characteristics which make up these indices seem to occur to a greater or lesser extent in certain council types. Also, when we compare these indices with each other we see that there is a tendency for the council type which scores high on one index to score high on the others, and the same generally applies to low and intermediate scores.

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In Table 10.1 a number of characteristics of councillors and the circumstances of their entering council work are brought together. The numbers in each column represent the rank order of each council type for each of the characteristics listed on the left. For example, the counties are ranked '5' for non-manual and manual worker councillors. This represents our finding that of the six council types the counties have the 5th highest proportion of non-manual and manual worker councillors. In the table only the rank *orders* are shown—the percentages on which these are based may be found in the relevant chapter summaries.

It will be seen that there is some consistency in the way the rank numbers run down the columns. The county boroughs have only ranks of 1 and 2, and the counties and rural districts have low ranks (except for attachment to the area). This means that we can begin to talk about the typical councillor who serves on certain kinds of councils, although it must be realised that these indices do not tell us whether it is the same *individual councillors* who have these characteristics and views. In the case of the county borough councillor, he tends more often to be a manual or non-manual worker than an employer, manager or professional, to have a lower educational level and income and to be

TABLE 10.1
Association of characteristics —
by council type

	Counties	County boroughs	Metro- politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs	Urban districts	Rural districts
	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank
% Non-manual and manual worker councillors	5	2	1	3	4	6
Index of lower educational level and income	4 =	1	6	2	3	4 =
% Members of political parties	3	2	1	4 =	4 =	6
Index of degree of political involvement*	5	2	1	3 =	3 =	6
Index of method of entry†	5	2	1	4	3	6
Index of high attachment to area	2	1	6	5	4	3

* Includes being brought into touch with council work through political parties, being asked to stand by them when under 40, and giving much thought to standing.

† Includes having to fight an election when first served and for current term and first serving when under 45. Indicates democratically active seat.

a member of a political party. He more often was brought into touch with council work through political parties, was asked to stand by them, and gave much thought to standing. He had to fight an election at an earlier age (index of 'method of entry to council') and has a high degree of attachment to the area he represents.

At the other end of the scale come the rural districts, closely followed by the county councils. Their members tend more often to be employers, managers

and professionals with higher educational levels and larger incomes, to have entered council work when older, without fighting an election, and as non-political candidates. But they have an attachment to their areas second only to that of county borough councillors. Thus it seems that attachment to the area is not a factor which can be related directly to the other characteristics we have considered.

The municipal boroughs and urban districts have very close scores on all the indices and this was the basis for our decision to combine them for the purposes of the interview survey. They occupy an intermediate position in the indices. This leaves the former metropolitan districts, which had extreme scores on the indices, but not in the same direction. Thus they had the highest proportion of non-manual and manual worker councillors, the highest entering council work at a younger age in a contested election, and the highest having given much thought to standing. But they had the *lowest* proportion of councillors with low educational level and income and the lowest attachment to the area. These last two facts probably represent the mixed socio-economic backgrounds of these councillors and the spread of their attachments outside the boroughs in which they lived.

We were also able to gain information about the characteristics of councillors in various age groups. Although we have details of this information for 5 age groups, it will be simpler to show it for 3 groups so that comparisons can be made with the attitude questions which we analysed by only the 3 groups (Table 10.2).

TABLE 10.2
Association of characteristics — by age

	Under 45	45-64	65 & over	
				Rank
Non-manual and manual worker councillors ..	1	2 =	2 =	
Index of lower educational level and income ..	3	2	1	
Members of political parties ..	1	2	3	
Index of degree of political involvement ..	1	2	3	
Index of method of entry*	1	2	3	
Index of high attachment to area ..	3	2	1	

* Includes having to fight an election when first served and for current term.

Younger councillors (under 45) were rather more likely than older ones to be non-manual and manual workers (50%) than older councillors were (39%).

The younger councillors were also more likely to have had to fight an election as political party candidates and to have given much thought to standing. On the other hand the younger councillors were less likely to have a lower educational level and income, and they were less attached to their areas.

The third main way in which we grouped councillors was by socio-economic status. The indices for these groups are shown in Table 10.3.

Educational level and income run down from the larger employers and professionals to the manual workers, but there are no such trends for the other indices. It is the non-manual and manual workers, who had most often a

TABLE 10.3
Association of characteristics — by socio-economic group

	Employers and managers with 25 or more sub- ordinates & profes- sionals	Employers and managers with under 25 subor- dinates & farmers	Non-man- ual & own account non-pro- fessionals	Manual and agricultur- al workers
	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank
Index of lower educational level and income	4	3	2	1
Members of political parties	3	4	2	1
Index of degree of political involvement	3	4	1	2
Index of method of entry*	2	4	1	3
Index of high attachment to area	4	1	3	2

* Includes having to fight an election when first served and for current term.

political background to standing, after giving it much thought, and most often had to fight an election, while the smaller employers and farmers scored lowest on these counts. The extremes of attachment to the area are accounted for by the mobile professionals and the non-mobile farmers, and appear to have no direct relation to the other factors considered.

The main points emerging from such a comparative analysis of the characteristics of councillors and of the ways in which they were brought into council work are:

- (1) There are substantial differences in the personal and political characteristics of members of different types of council. For example, we find major differences between county boroughs on the one hand and rural districts and counties on the other. It simplifies the picture too much to speak of local government as if it were a unity, and it would be misleading to ignore the widely varying elements of which it is composed. Any reorganisation or changes in procedure might be expected to have very different effects on different types of authority.
- (2) Similarly we find that there are consistent differences between younger and older councillors. If, as a result of changes in local government, more younger councillors were to be brought in, this might be expected to raise the general educational and income level and the willingness to fight elections. At present it is the political parties who bring in a substantial proportion of younger people.
- (3) There are substantial differences in the extent to which the different socio-economic groups enter council work and in their method of entry or recruitment. Changes in the composition of councils might be expected only from major changes in the channels and methods of recruitment and these are to a considerable extent rooted in present-day social structure and organisation.

Recruitment—attitudes

How are councillors' attitudes to the problems of recruitment related to their own characteristics? In Chapter II we compiled an index of negative views on recruitment. We suggested that 'negative views' included believing that some sections of the people were not sufficiently represented, that there is difficulty in getting good candidates, and knowing suitable people who would not stand. In Table 10.4 this index is put alongside indices of degree of political interest and method of entry.

TABLE 10.4
Index of negative views on recruitment compared with index of degree of political interest and method of entry — by council type

	Counties	County boroughs	Metro-politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank
Negative views on recruitment	3	2	5	1	4
Degree of political interest ..	4	2	1	3	5
Method of entry ..	4	2	1	3	5

There is not a complete positive correlation between the lines. In the metropolitan boroughs we see that councillors were relatively optimistic about recruitment and were also likely to have a high degree of political interest and high chances of having to fight an election. For the other four types of areas, however, a tendency does seem to emerge. The figures suggest that the harder the circumstances of councillors' own entry to the council the harder they think it is to get adequate representation by suitable candidates.

PART 2: COUNCIL EXPERIENCE**The way councillors spend their time**

On average, councillors are spending about 52 hours per working month on their public activities. Just over half of this time goes on council meetings, attending committees, or on activities connected with committees. Less than a quarter of all councillors' public time is spent actually sitting in council or committee.

But there are very big differences between the time spent on their public duties by different kinds of councillor. Whilst on average something over 29 hours per working month are spent on *committee work*, over 40% of all councillors are spending less than 20 hours a month on this activity and about one-fifth are spending more than 40 hours a month. Nearly half of all county borough councillors are spending 40 hours or more per month.

It follows from this that, if changes in local government were to lead to more 'all purpose authorities', then *more* time would be needed from councillors on average, other things remaining the same. If, through changes in procedure, there was a reduction in council and committee meeting time, it would be

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likely to help most county borough and county councillors and to help least rural district councillors, simply because the former already spend very much more time and the latter much less time on existing committee work.

There are also large differences between the socio-economic groups. Manual worker councillors spend an average of 50 hours a month on *committees and their electors*, while the small employer and farmer councillors spend only 29 hours. Manual workers, who spend most time, are more under-represented numerically on councils than any section of the population. Managers and employers in small businesses and farmers, who spend least time, are represented at four times their strength in the general population. Councillors with the least education and lower incomes are spending more time on this work than other councillors, but these differences are smaller than those between types of council or socio-economic groups.

It follows from these findings that the differences in the personal and political characteristics of councillors in different types of authority, which we have noted, affect the behaviour of councils. A recruitment procedure which brought more manual workers on to a council would, other things being equal, make more councillor working hours available. This would not necessarily make the council more efficient.

However, it is difficult to guess at the possible effect of reorganising committee work on different socio-economic groups. Clearly some of those who are now in public life, but who do not want to spend very long hours on it, seem to have found their own way of adapting the situation to their personal needs. While manual workers, those in the lowest income groups, and those with least education, now spend more time than others it does not follow that reducing the time spent on council and committee meetings would bring in more of other groups. It might also bring in more of the very large numbers of, say, manual workers who are now represented in only a very limited way. Those with larger scale managerial and professional experience at present serve about the average amount of time. Reducing the time involved would bring in more of them only if the time spent turned out to be the major obstacle to those not at present actually engaged in council work. Some evidence on this point is presented in Chapter IX and in the report on the electors' survey.

Councillors and their committees

Sixteen per cent of all councillors are members of council only, or of one or two committees, but a small minority (4%) are members of 15 or more. Over 60% of councillors are members of 3-8 committees, and the average for all councillors is nearly 6 committees.

There are big differences in the times at which meetings start in the different types of council. In the county councils over two-thirds of all meetings start in the morning and most of the rest in the afternoon. In the county boroughs most start in the afternoon, while in the urban districts two-thirds start after 6.30 p.m. A larger proportion of older councillors attend morning meetings while a larger proportion of the younger councillors attend the meetings starting after 6.30. It is quite clear that there is a close relationship between membership of committees which start at different times of the day and the councillors' own working arrangements. Evening meetings are much more

likely to be attended by those working away from the council area or those working full-time, whilst morning meetings are more likely to be attended by those working in the council area. It seems to follow that by setting the times for their meetings councillors are to some extent also deciding what kind of people attend them and also, perhaps, influencing to some extent interest in becoming a councillor.

We have looked at the way all committee time is distributed among different committees on all councils taken together. Housing takes up 18% of all committee time and 16% goes on Town and Country Planning. Over half of rural district council time goes on these two activities. In county councils over half goes on Health and Welfare and on Education. The proportion of all committee time spent on General Administration (including general purpose and staff) is greater in the smaller authorities than in the larger ones.

Forty-four per cent of the councillors' time, or about 23 hours a month, is spent away from committee work. About 7½ hours a month is spent on electors' problems but nearly half of all councillors spend less than five hours *a month* dealing with electors and their problems. There is a minority of 9%, however, who spend 20 hours or more per month dealing with electors.

Nearly a quarter of all the councillor's public time is spent with other organisations on which he represents the council or follows his own interests.

How do councillors feel about the way they spend their time?

We asked councillors' views on the way in which *their councils* were helping the public and we have related these opinions to councillors' feelings about their own *personal* effectiveness on committee. Whilst 28% thought Housing was their council's biggest field of public service, only 13% thought Housing was their own most effective field. On the other hand, whilst only 4% thought that the provision of amenities was their council's outstanding service, 13% thought their own most effective contribution was in this field. These discrepancies between what councillors feel about their own role and the work of their authorities are found in all types of authority and in groups of councillors with different characteristics. Forty-seven per cent of the younger councillors thought that Housing and Education were areas where their council had done most to help people, but only 13% of this group felt that these two committee activities had been their own most effective areas.

About 30% of all committee time was spent on activities where councillors felt they had, on balance, been most effective personally (Housing, Amenities, Trading and Public Utilities). Forty-two per cent of all committee time went on committees where, on balance, councillors felt they had been least effective personally (Highways and Roads, Finance, Town and Country Planning, and General Administration).

A majority, nevertheless, still felt they were on committees which interested them most or where they could do most good. Only 16% of all councillors would prefer to change some of their committees but 25% of the younger councillors said they would like to make such changes.

This information, from which we can discern discrepancies between the public and the private role of councillors, came from people who were still councillors, though some of them had rather short service. It must surely

affect the balance of satisfactions and frustrations which decides whether councillors continue their public service.

How councillors feel about council work

Councillors' main satisfactions arise out of particular council activities, among which housing and old people's welfare are the most prominent. In contrast, the frustrations of councillors' work seem to arise mainly out of the way the machinery of local government works and in particular out of relations with central government or county councils and delays of various sorts. Only about 8% of councillors mentioned party politics as a cause of frustration.

What is the effect of council work on councillors' private lives? Two-thirds of our informants said that council work had either made no difference to or had helped their private life. A quarter said that their private life had suffered, and this figure rose to 39% among county borough councillors, who spend most time of all on their public duties. An above-average proportion of manual worker councillors said that their private life had suffered, as did younger councillors.

Nearly three-quarters of informants said that being a councillor had given them the opportunity of using abilities which otherwise they would not have used. Manual workers had the highest proportion saying this, particularly in relation to public speaking, self-expression, and widening their outlook and knowledge.

How do councillors see council work in relation to their occupation? Over two-thirds of working councillors said that relations with people in their daily occupation had *not* been affected by their council activities. County borough and non-manual and manual worker councillors were more likely than others to say that such relationships had been affected for better or for worse. About a third of employed informants found council work more satisfying than their occupation, a third less satisfying, and a third enjoyed both.

We can add together the answers to various questions to produce an index of satisfaction with council work in relation to occupation. From this, it appears that county borough councillors are most satisfied, and rural district councillors least. The employers and managers in large firms and professionals seem to get substantially less satisfaction from council work as compared with occupation than the manual workers.

It may be that younger councillors in interesting and progressive jobs tend to see council work as a kind of *supplement* in their lives, middle-aged councillors in more routine and undemanding jobs see it as *compensation* for what is lacking in their working lives, and retired councillors see it as a *substitute* for an occupation. These motives would apply in differing degrees among the various socio-economic groups, and therefore in differing degrees to the council types on which these socio-economic groups are variously represented.

Our results show that the time put into council work, the satisfactions and frustrations, the effects on private life, and the opportunities it offers, vary for different types of councillor. The position of the county borough councillor or of the manual worker councillor in respect of most of these points is different from that of other groups of councillors. This indicates that the motivations for serving on councils may be very different for different sections of the

population. Any reorganisation, then, would be likely to produce very different effects in these different groups, or bring in sections of the population whose motivations might not be the same as those which now induce people to become or stay councillors. And, presumably, if it were thought desirable to bring different groups of people into council work, then appeal would have to be made to a different balance of motivations and interests than those which operate at present.

Do councillors feel frustrated because of statutory or practical limitations on the powers of their authorities? Most councillors feel that their councils are now making full use of their powers and authority. Forty-three per cent, however, feel that more powers are needed, and 44% feel that the central government puts unnecessary limitations on councils. Councillors who were employers and managers in both small and large concerns, professionals and farmers were *less likely* than the other two groups of manual and non-manual workers to feel that more power was needed.

The limitations which irk councillors relate directly to the kinds of responsibility their authority carries. County councillors, for example, were more likely to be worried about limitations on their ability to deal with education than housing. Nearly two-thirds of all complaints made about county councils by urban and rural district councillors relate to planning controls.

Councillors' opinions on the powers of local authorities were related to their own range of social contacts. The more organisations they belonged to, the more likely they were to feel that full use was not made of existing powers, or that the central government limited the freedom of council unnecessarily. It seems that the wider the councillor's social contacts the more aware he becomes of problems and needs or, perhaps, the more subject he becomes to various group pressures for action.

Attitudes towards change

Do councillors feel that councils do enough for people? A majority of all councillors felt that councils *are* now doing enough for people. But 45% of all, and over 60% of county borough and metropolitan borough councillors, thought that more should be done. The leading problems which it was thought would require a great deal of attention were Town Planning, Housing, Traffic Schemes and Public Utilities. Education was mentioned much more frequently, of course, by councillors in the county and county boroughs but in total came well down the list.

If more was to be done by councils how could time be found for it? Most councillors thought it would mean extra time, but 20% thought time could be found by changing existing procedures. But rather more councillors than this agreed that some specific proposals for change could provide some of the time needed. For example, 33% of all councillors and 43% of county borough councillors thought that time could be found if more detailed work were left to officials.

Councillors' response to particular suggestions showed a much greater willingness to consider change than appears on the surface. That is to say, whilst the overall sentiment appears to be somewhat conservative and against change there is a much greater positive response to particular concrete proposals.

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The willingness to consider change was greatest where, as amongst younger councillors or in the county boroughs, there was a stronger feeling that councils should 'do more to help people and improve things'. Experience shows that on many changes in government procedures in Britain opinion alters after they have come about. The present level of feeling for change, then, does not enable us to predict what attitudes will be after some proposals for change have been much more clearly outlined and even less can we say what opinion will be after they have been put into operation.

We have examined councillors' opinions on the present system of payment for loss of earnings, subsistence, travelling and stationery. In general, a majority of present councillors thought such payments were adequate but on some of these points substantial numbers of councillors thought changes were needed. For example, half of all county borough councillors would like to see allowances for loss of earnings increased.

Two-thirds of all informants did not think that councillors should be paid for being councillors, but 40% of county councillors thought that all or some should be paid. Only about 3-4% of all councillors thought that such payments would help to attract 'good or better qualified people'.

The main arguments advanced against payment of councillors were the importance of maintaining the voluntary tradition, and that payment would 'attract the wrong kind of person'.

The majority of councillors did not feel that the absence of the title 'mayor' in some authorities affected either the public standing of the councils or the willingness of people to stand for office. Neither did they feel that the position of alderman had much effect on either the standing of councils or their work, or the willingness of people to stand. These views were shared by aldermen.

About half of all councillors thought there should be a retiring age for councillors, and three-quarters thought there should be a limit to the time people could be chairmen of council or mayor. A majority thought there should be a limit to the time any individual might be chairman of any one committee.

PART 3: THE COUNCILLOR'S PUBLIC RELATIONSHIPS

Councillors' links with other organisations

Councillors spend on average about 21 hours a month with other organisations. About 12 hours of this time goes on what they regard as 'part of the work of a councillor'. The rest is in connection with private interests.

The time which councillors spend on these organisations is of a completely different order from the time spent on voluntary bodies by electors. Amongst councillors 44% are spending 19 or more hours a month on these organisations, but only 11% of electors are spending as much time, and for councillors this is a form of activity which is additional to work on council committees and time spent with electors. There may well be something like two million electors who are spending substantial periods of time on these organisations. Many of them have only social or leisure purposes, but substantial proportions of this large

number, as is shown in the Electors' survey report, take a leading part in various kinds of 'issue' organisations. Do these people represent a possible pool from which councillors might be recruited?

Councillors belong, on average, to between 6 and 7 organisations, and many councillors belong to a very large number. Political organisations or trade unions account for only a small part, and more than half of all memberships are of organisations concerned with educational, religious, welfare or leisure purposes. County councillors have more memberships than any other type of councillor, and are more likely to think of these interests *as part of the work* of a councillor, whilst other, and especially rural district, councillors are more likely to regard a large part of this time as a *private* rather than a public interest.

Membership of these other organisations seems to reach a peak around the age of 45-54 and is highest also amongst councillors with some form of further education.

Councillors of all types see more advantages than disadvantages in using voluntary organisations to meet new and developing needs. They have some particular services in mind as those for which voluntary organisations are most suitable. The most prominent are services for older people (especially 'meals on wheels'), youth clubs and services, recreational facilities, help for handicapped people (especially the blind), and medical auxiliary services.

It has been shown earlier that, whilst many councillors first came into touch with council work through voluntary organisations, only a few were actually asked by such bodies to stand for the council. If there were more formal connections between councils and those voluntary bodies whose work complements that of the council, would this make recruitment easier than it is at present? Could such a development in the course of time provide more of the formal channels of recruitment which seem at present to be lacking?

Party politics

What part does party politics play in local government? How essential is it to the system which now operates?

Two-thirds of all councillors are members of political organisations, but the proportion varies greatly from 95% of county borough councillors to about half that proportion in the rural districts. Many fewer councillors than this, however, had actually been brought into council work by political bodies and 12% of those who are now members joined *after* or about the time they joined the council.

In county boroughs and the former metropolitan boroughs nearly all councillors can be described as 'party political'. In the rural districts, on the other hand, over 70% said they were 'independent' or not attached to any formally organised majority or main opposition group. Nearly two-thirds of the smaller employers and farmers describe themselves as 'independent'. Only 10% of the manual worker councillors do so, whilst 87% say they are members of the majority or main opposition group in council.

Do councillors think that party support is essential for election to local councils? Councillors are divided almost half and half on this question. The proportion thinking such support was necessary was of course directly related

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to whether or not the councillor's own council was organised on party lines, but even so only about two-thirds of those who said party support was essential were themselves formally asked to stand by a political party.

Only about one-quarter of all councillors thought that party support was both necessary and affected the kind of candidate chosen. On balance more thought it *improved* the chances of good candidates being selected.

Very few councillors think that party politics in local government prevents likely candidates from standing. When asked if there was anything which might make them give up the work, not more than 4% of all councillors mentioned any of the effects of the system of party politics in local government.

How do councillors think that party politics affects the work of councils? When we put this issue to councillors, three-quarters said that they did not think that party politics affected the work of councils. This response is contrary to much prevalent speculation. It varies between different types of council. County borough councillors were more likely than others to say that the work was affected. Only 16% of all councillors thought the work was affected through the enforcement of 'doctrinaire policies' or through delay 'because of political discussion'. Other comments suggested that the effects of party politics were favourable because, for example, it 'helps to get clear-cut decisions'. County borough councillors, who made most adverse comments, *also* made most favourable comments.

The impression given by these results is confirmed by councillors' answers to many other questions. Only 8% mentioned party politics when asked to say what they had found 'frustrating or unsatisfactory' in council work. Only 2% said that party politics hindered the full use of council powers. When they were asked if more time could be found for council work by cutting out party debate only 13% said 'yes'.

When councillors were asked if they thought the party system essential to the work of councils, or if the work could be done better without it, a majority said the work could be done better without it, but there are major differences between the views of councillors in different areas on this question. Eighty-nine per cent of rural district councillors, for example, a large proportion of whom are returned unopposed, thought local council work could be better done without the party system but only 24% of county borough councillors. If the rural districts are excluded from the total, only 49% of the remaining councillors think the work could be done better without the party system. Most of the councillors who thought the party system essential were members of the majority or main opposition groups—they were themselves involved in the party politics of local councils. Similarly a majority of those who thought the work could be better done without it called themselves 'independent'. But 37% of those who thought the work could be better done without it were also at the time of the survey members of the majority or main opposition groups on their councils.

The main argument for the party system was that 'the work gets done more quickly'. The main arguments against it were that 'party policies are pursued regardless of the individual' or 'party politics have no relevance to local government'.

Manual worker councillors were the only grouping with a majority in favour of the party system (56%). The employers and managers in small businesses and

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farmers had the largest majority against it (81%). Detailed analysis of results seems to suggest that, as a group, the councillors who think party politics essential are likely to be the keener members of councils.

To judge from the views expressed by councillors themselves, party politics plays a much smaller part in local government than is widely assumed. These views are supported by those of ex-councillors who no longer have the same commitments. Most of the critical comment on the role of party politics in local government ignores the important role played by political parties in recruiting councillors. Without them local government councillors would be more unrepresentative than they now are.

That councillors on the whole say that party politics do not greatly affect the actual work of council is less surprising than might at first sight appear. In very many councils and particularly in the numerous rural district councils the work is not organised on lines usual in national politics and it is therefore natural for many councillors in such areas to believe that council work would be better done without party politics. Many of those councillors who are most opposed to party politics put in much *less* time on council work, or with associated voluntary organisations, or even with their electors, than councillors who think that party politics are essential.

Only a few councillors think that party politics dissuades many likely candidates from standing, or that it plays more than a minor role in any dissatisfaction that councillors now feel with the work. Even so, if rural districts are excluded, about one-half of all other councillors feel that local government work could be done better without party politics. County borough councillors, however, are much more likely than others to think that party politics are essential.

In Chapter VII we made use of an index of favourable attitude to party politics. By placing this index against certain others it is possible to see to what extent political attitude is accompanied by other attitudes or characteristics (Table 10.5). The proportion of councillors in any council type who were asked to stand by a political party may be taken as an index of the degree to which that council type is 'political'. The relationship between 'political' councils and spending much time on council work appears to be a fairly close one, with the exception of the metropolitan boroughs. The 'political' council types are also those with the highest degree of interest in change in council work, or 'activism'. Finally, there appears to be no direct association between political attitude and turnover rate.

TABLE 10.5
Index of favourable attitude to party politics compared with other indices —
by council type

	Counties	County boroughs	Metro- politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank
Index of favourable attitude to party politics	3	1	2	4	5
Proportion asked to stand by political party	4	2	1	3	5
All time spent as a councillor	2	1	4	3	5
Index of interest in change in council work ('activism')	4	1	2	3	5
Turnover rate	5	4	1	2	3

Councillors and the public

Since the council represents the public interest, an examination of the relationships which exist between the public and the council should give some indication of whether the system is meeting the purpose for which it exists.

Councillors take the view that unfavourable attitudes to council work are held only by a few, but that a large proportion of the public is not very interested in it. It certainly seems at present that the public is not very enthusiastic about council activities but it is not clear whether this is due to lack of interest in what councils are actually doing or to a major failure of communication between councillors and public which results in the public feeling that it does not know very clearly what its councils are doing. The electors' survey shows that nearly half of all electors were unable to mention anything that their councils had done in the previous year to help people or would not venture an opinion on what they thought had done most to help or said that, in their view, the council had done nothing to help people and improve things during that time! At the very least this indicates a very low level of awareness of council activities amongst electors. It is relevant in this connection that over a quarter of electors believe that councillors are paid a salary, and the younger electors are even more likely than the older to think this.

Information is available to many through their use of the local press, but it has not made much impression on most of those who have been exposed to it. Perhaps because of this, there are large discrepancies between the opinions of councillors and of that section of the public which has views on the question on how council work has helped people in the past or what needs most attention in the future. Electors, for example, are far less concerned than councillors with the need for more town planning activities. On the other hand they gave very much more weight than councillors to the need for leisure facilities, particularly for children and teenagers. Both electors and councillors attach importance to doing more about housing problems. Electors seem more concerned than councillors that more should be done about the welfare of old people. These electors' opinions are likely to be based on very inadequate information about what councils are now doing. Such discrepancies between the attitudes of councillors and electors, however, could seriously affect the public standing of councils and councillors regardless of whether or not they are well founded.

All types of councillors believe that the public takes a more favourable view of them than of their councils. The public may not display many overt signs of interest but considerable proportions, particularly of the younger electors, say they would like to know more about council work, and higher proportions of electors than councillors say they would like their councils to 'do more'. This may well be because many do not know what is now being done.

It seems equally true that many councillors do not have a large number of direct personal contacts with electors. Much the largest channel of communication between them is informal, that is to say, contacts arising out of casual meetings and not arranged beforehand by correspondence or appointment. More formal approaches play a much smaller part and, although political parties are important in the selection and promotion of councillors, they play a minor role as a source of information about the needs and attitudes of the

public. Special organisations set up to provide electors with the opportunity to ask for help or make known their grievances make only a very small contribution to councillors' knowledge of public needs. There is a proportion of councillors who, either on a personal basis or through addressing groups and associations, make some kind of contact with many hundreds of electors a year and this proportion of highly active councillors raises the average number of contacts for all councillors to a much higher level than it would otherwise reach. *Nearly one-third* of all councillors, however, had personal contact with four or fewer electors during the four weeks before the interview or *less than one a week*. Only 17% of electors had ever met a councillor, and not more than 6% said they had done so during the last year.

In view of these limited contacts and the obvious gaps on both sides of the democratic equation, it is not surprising that very many councillors and electors feel that electors neither know enough to make full use of council services nor to form a balanced picture of what councils are doing. Eighty per cent of councillors felt that electors did not know enough to form a balanced view of councils' activities. Despite this ignorance, a majority of both councillors and electors nevertheless believed that effective participation in local elections was possible. Younger councillors, and those with some form of further education, were more likely than others to believe that 'the public does not know enough'.

We asked councillors what they thought could be done to raise the level of public interest. Nearly a fifth could not think of anything useful which could be done but about a third thought that what was needed was better public relations, publicity or coverage by press and television, and another 12% publicity organised by councillors themselves.

It is very clear from this information that much better communication between councils, councillors, and electors is essential if public interest in local government is to reach higher levels. This is necessary both for the assurance and support it will give councillors and because it will then be more possible for the whole system to fulfil the purpose for which it exists.

Aspects of council experience compared

The chapters reviewed in parts 2 and 3 above include data on various aspects of the work of a councillor. In the section on the way councillors spend their public time we saw that certain types of councillor tend to spend more time and generally to be more involved in the work than others. These results may be compared with the degree to which councillors are active in non-council organisations, or have contact with electors (Table 10.6).

Once again, two types of council—the county boroughs and the rural districts—are at either end of the scale. The county boroughs are highest (or second highest) in spending time on all council work, number of committee memberships, being involved in non-council organisations, and having contact with electors. The rural district councils are consistently low in these items. The metropolitan borough councillors scored second lowest on these items.

There is not such a clear trend in these factors in working experience for

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TABLE 10.6
Factors in working experience — by council type

	Counties	County boroughs	Metro- politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank
All time spent as a councillor	2	1	4	3	5
Number of council committee memberships	1	2	5	3	4
Index of involvement in non-council organisations	1	2	4	3	5
Number of contacts with electors	3	1	4	2	5

the various age groups (Table 10.7). The older councillors tend to put in more time on council work and to be on more committees, but they are less actively involved in non-council organisations. At middle age the involvement in non-council organisations and the number of contacts with electors seems to be greatest.

TABLE 10.7
Factors in working experience — by age

	Under 45	45-64	65 & over
	Rank	Rank	Rank
All time spent as a councillor	3	2	1
Number of council committee memberships	3	2	1
Index of involvement in non-council organisations	2	1	3
Number of contacts with electors	2 =	1	2 =

The analysis by socio-economic groups shows a rather clearer pattern (Table 10.8). The manual worker councillors spend most time on committee work, are on most committees and have the greatest number of contacts with electors. But they are not so highly involved in non-council organisations as the large employers, professionals or non-manual workers.

TABLE 10.8
Factors in working experience — by socio-economic group

	Employers and managers with 25 or more sub- ordinates and pro- fessionals	Employers and managers with under 25 sub- ordinates and farmers	Non-man- ual & own account non-pro- fessionals	Manual and agri- cultural workers
	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank
All time spent as a councillor	3	4	2	1
Number of council committee memberships	3	4	2	1
Index of involvement in non-council organisations	1	3 =	2	3 =
Number of contacts with electors	3	4	2	1

At this point we may consider what might be the consequences for the quantity of work per councillor if more councillors of certain types were to be brought in. There is nothing we can say about the *quality* or efficiency of the work done, for reasons stated earlier in this report. If changes were made in recruitment policies and conditions which encouraged more younger people to become councillors the indication is that less time would be spent on council work. This may be partly explained by older councillors being on more committees, but the younger councillors also spend less time on non-committee aspects of council work. The reasons for this may include the responsibilities of early family life and of making a career, together with the fact that retired people have more time to spare for council work.

It is sometimes suggested that employers, managers and professional people, who generally have higher levels of education and qualifications, make more efficient councillors. But our data suggest that bringing more of these people into council work (and it must be remembered that they are already heavily over-represented in proportion to their numbers among the electorate) would not be likely to add to the total time spent on council work nor to the amount of contact with electors. On the other hand, the fact that some councillors spend a lot of time on their public work does not necessarily mean that they do the work most effectively. A *reduction* in the proportion of small employers and farmers would be likely to *increase* the number of councillors who are willing to spend much time on contact with electors and on all forms of council activity.

Attitudes to council experience compared

The councillor's attitude to his public work has three broad aspects: (a) his own satisfaction with the work, (b) his concern with changes which might be made, either in the way the work is done or its scope, and (c) his idea of the kind of reception the public gives to the work of his council or of councils generally. In Chapter III we gave an index of attitude to committee work, in which a high score indicated a preference to change some committee memberships, a feeling that there was not enough time for all aspects of the work and that some groups or individuals had too much power. In Chapter V there was an index of interest in change in procedures and in widening the scope of the work. The kind of people who scored high on this might be called activists in council work. Very small proportions of councillors thought the public had an unfavourable view of their work, but many thought the public was not interested—and variations in these proportions may be taken as an indication of the councillors' idea of how the public regards their work. Finally we believe that the index of satisfaction with council work in relation to occupation, although it appears to be a fairly restricted comparison, is a good indicator of the amount of *general* satisfaction a councillor feels with his public service.

In Table 10.9 these indices for the types of council are brought together. In the rural districts there is least concern with changing the details or scope of council work. However, rural district councillors are *least* likely to believe that the public is not interested in their work. As we noted in Chapter VIII, this may be because many rural councillors are to some extent out of touch with the electorate—they spend below average time on dealing with electors and do

TABLE 10.9
Attitudes to working experience — by council type

	Counties	County boroughs	Metro-politan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank
Index of positive attitude to committee changes ..	4	1	3	2	5
Index of interest in change in council work ('activism') ..	4	1	2	3	5
Believe public is not interested in work of council	2	3	1	4	5
Index of satisfaction with council work in relation to occupation	2	1	3	4	5

not fight many elections. Perhaps this relative isolation from electors also helps to explain why the rural district councillors seem to be less involved with their public service than with their occupation.

The county borough councillors contain the highest proportion of activists, both in regard to committee and other changes yet they seem to get the most satisfaction out of council work compared to their occupation. They are more *involved* in the work, both in the senses of spending time and of being concerned with the arrangements for doing the work. They occupy an intermediate position on their view of the public's attitude, possibly because they are more aware both of its apathy and of the ways in which it can be helped by council action. Perhaps the more they want to do the more they are conscious of the need for public support and the more sensitive to its absence. In this they are the contrary of rural district councillors.

The analysis of attitudes by age is shown in Table 10.10. The younger councillors are more likely to be activists, but they are neither so satisfied with the work as the middle-aged group nor as convinced that the public is not interested in the work of councils. Since the middle-aged group has more contacts with electors they probably have a more realistic view of the public's attitude. Although the older group of councillors spends a lot of time on council work, they contain the fewest activists and may tend to have an over-optimistic view of the public's interest in their work.

TABLE 10.10
Attitudes to working experience — by age

	Under 45	45-64	65 & over
	Rank	Rank	Rank
Index of positive attitude to committee changes ..	1	2	3
Index of interest in change in council work ('activism') ..	1	2	3
Believe public is not interested in work of councils ..	2	1	3
Index of satisfaction with council work in relation to occupation	2	1	3

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The manual worker councillors, who spend the most time on their council work, are more likely than other socio-economic groups to accept the need for changes in their committee arrangements, but are less keen on reforms designed to find more time for council work and less inclined to feel that the public is not interested in their work (Table 10.11). The smaller employers, managers, and farmers, are least likely to want change and are more optimistic about the public's interest in their work.

TABLE 10.11
Attitudes to working experience—by socio-economic group

	Employers and managers with 25 or more sub- ordinates and pro- fessionals	Employers and managers with under 25 sub- ordinates and farmers	Non-man- ual & own account non-pro- fessionals	Manual and agri- cultural workers
	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank
Index of positive attitude to committee changes	3	4	2	1
Index of interest in change in council work ('activism')	1	4	2	3
Believe public is not interested in work of council	3	2	1	4
Index of satisfaction with council work in relation to occupation	4	3	2	1

If more councillors with certain characteristics were brought into council work how would this be likely to affect the balance of opinion? This question can only be answered on the assumption that new councillors would tend to feel the same about their working experience as members of the same kind of groups who are now on the council. Bringing in more younger councillors would probably tend to increase the dissatisfaction with the present distribution of committee memberships among councillors, with the lack of time available for the work, and with the power which some individuals or groups have. Younger councillors are keener activists, but they are not more put off than the average with the amount of time spent on party debate.

The relatively few manual workers on councils at present may be a very special section of all manual workers. If more were brought in perhaps they would differ in some respects from those now serving. However, it is reasonable to suppose that they would be more like sitting manual worker councillors in their opinions than like sitting professional councillors, for example. If more manual workers were to become councillors, they might tend to be willing to spend more time or to take a somewhat more positive attitude to the role of party politics in local government. More manual worker councillors would also probably raise the general level of personal satisfaction derived from the work. On the other hand, a large representation of employers, managers and professionals might result in stronger pressure to change council procedures and less willingness to spend as much time as many other councillors now spend.

Part 4: WHY COUNCILLORS LEAVE

The maintenance of an efficient level of local government work requires not only that suitable councillors take up the work and feel reasonably satisfied with their labours but also that they should not give it up too quickly. We have tried to bring together all the information we have which tells us something about why councillors give up the work. In the first place we must ask: how frequently do councillors leave?

From the information we have about sitting councillors, it is apparent that some stay longer than others. The employers and managers in the smaller businesses and farmers, and also those councillors who have no formal qualifications, seem to stay longer and non-manual workers give up sooner than average. But more direct information from our sample of ex-councillors enabled us to calculate turnover rates, that is to say, the rates at which different kinds of people tend to leave councils. Overall, about 6% of all councillors give up the work each year. The turnover rate was highest amongst the former metropolitan borough councillors and lowest for county councillors. The size of councils appears to make no difference to the turnover rate. If all types of council in a region are grouped together no significant regional differences emerge in the tendency to give up the work.

A much higher proportion of those aged under 45 than might be expected appear to give up the work very quickly. Professionals and self-employed people give up the work at a higher than average rate. But workers in nationalised industries or public bodies, those who are not working full-time and those with relatively low income levels have a low turnover rate.

Amongst ex-councillors at the end of 1964 there was a very high proportion who had served a short time only. Over half of the ex-councillors had served for the first time only in 1958 or after, and of these nearly half were under 45. There were proportionately more non-manual and manual workers among the short service ex-councillors than among the longer service ones, and more small employers and farmers among the longer servers.

Do people give up the work because of the time involved? Time spent on council work seems to be related to turnover only in a negative way—the members of county and county borough councils, who spend the *most* time, have the *lowest* turnover rate. Older councillors, who have a high turnover rate, spend *more* time than younger ones on their public duties, so it is probably age and not willingness which deters them from carrying on. Manual workers, for whom turnover is lowest, spend *more* time than other socio-economic groups. We are forced to the conclusion that it is not the time he actually spends but the time an individual is *prepared* to spend that is likely to determine whether he stays on or leaves the council.

What do ex-councillors say about giving up the work? We were able to compare the opinions of councillors and ex-councillors on many issues and in this way to judge whether particular matters had played an important role in the decision to give up the work. It is apparent that many ex-councillors have taken less trouble than sitting councillors to acquire special knowledge relevant to the work. Younger ex-councillors and those with only short service were less likely than older ones to have known much about council work when they took it up. It seems, then, that many of those who had given up the work were less

prepared for it and had taken less trouble than others to equip themselves for it. For one reason or another many people become councillors who do not have close acquaintance with the work and the realities quickly prove to be very different from their expectations and their capabilities. These people contributed disproportionately to the turnover rate. They are very likely to be under the age of 45.

About one-third of ex-councillors said they had given up because of ill-health or old age, and another third because of the time involved or, what might amount to the same thing, financial, business or domestic reasons. In contrast to those two-thirds who had given up because of such personal circumstances 8% said they had given up because of frustrations with the party system and 13% because of other aspects of the organisation of local government work: 21%, that is to say, were frustrated with 'the system'.

If we consider only those ex-councillors who are under 65 'the time involved' and 'family/business' reasons account for 40% of those leaving. These reasons probably account for as many as one-half of ex-councillors under the age of 45.

'Party politics' and other frustrations arising out of the organisation of local government (mainly the latter) account for more than one-third of ex-councillors who have served 3 years or less. This group is more likely to have been unprepared for council work, and many in it must find rather quickly that they cannot cope with the actual conditions of council participation. Another one in six of these short service councillors gives up the work because of moving out of the district.

The better-educated councillors were more likely to give as their reasons for leaving the council 'the time involved', frustrations with either party politics or other aspects of the organisation of local government or that they had moved from the district. Those with least education were more likely to give ill-health or age or business and domestic reasons.

Whilst a two-thirds majority of both councillors and ex-councillors thought they had been able to spend as much time as needed on all aspects of council work, the short service and younger ex-councillors were more likely to think that not enough time had been available. They were similarly less likely to think that proper weight had been given to all points of view in council deliberations. These groups (and to a large extent they overlap) were, then, more unhappy about their council experience. They form a substantial proportion of those ex-councillors who gave up the work for reasons other than illness or old age.

Perhaps the newer councillors had been too impatient to acquire the necessary knowledge or, alternatively, perhaps procedures for integrating new councillors into council work are not sufficiently developed to ensure that the young or inexperienced can work their way gradually into it.

We find some differences between what former and sitting councillors said about the satisfactions and frustrations of council work. Fewer ex-councillors seem to have got satisfaction from specific council activities. They were more likely than sitting councillors to express rather general satisfaction with 'co-operating with other councillors' or 'helping others'. When asked about their frustrations they were more likely than sitting councillors to talk about

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unsatisfactory relations with other councillors or officials. It seems clear that these personal relationships played an important role in making some councillors give up the work. This reinforces the point made earlier about the importance of integrating new councillors into the work of council.

The results indicate in their different ways how important a part personal relationships had played for some ex-councillors. They suggest that many of those who come on to councils have not considered sufficiently beforehand how well they would manage the many-sided relationships involved in working as a councillor.

Ex-councillors do *not* appear to feel any more than sitting councillors that existing powers are not used to the full or that more powers are needed. Those who had served for only a short time and the younger ex-councillors, however, were less likely to feel satisfied on this score. The younger ex-councillors were also more likely than others to feel that central government was unnecessarily restrictive. These groups clearly felt a greater urge for action, and for them to fit into council work more easily it seems that when they come on to the council they will need to have a better understanding of the limitations under which councillors work.

It appears that ex-councillors are somewhat less happy than sitting councillors about existing council procedures, but not very much so. Whilst many of them would approve changes in, for example, the number of committees on which councillors sit or 'leaving more work to officials' just as many, and on some issues more, would be against changes. To judge by the opinions they expressed, while the feeling of a need for radical change may have motivated some councillors to give up the work, for many more it was the time taken on council work and its encroachment on private interests that forced them to give it up rather than any conviction that they were wasting time on unnecessary procedures.

Ex-councillors *at all ages* were *more* satisfied than sitting councillors with what councils were doing to 'help people and improve things in the area'. Though both newer ex-councillors and newer sitting councillors would like their councils to be doing more, this relates to age rather than to whether people had left the council or not. It seems from these results that dissatisfaction with council efforts is not, by itself, a major motive for leaving.

The younger ex-councillors were rather more likely to have been closely attached to political groups than older ex-councillors, and this inevitably makes them more sympathetic to the idea of political parties in local government, but on the whole the majority of ex-councillors thought that party politics did not greatly affect the work of councils. Neither did the majority of councillors or ex-councillors in any age group think that the party system was essential to the work of councils. Ex-councillors were somewhat more likely than sitting councillors to believe that local government work could be done better without party politics.

Although political parties bring many people into councils, and clearly must play some part in council deliberations, nevertheless the impression given by what sitting councillors tell us is that the actual work of council is not greatly affected by party politics and these are also the views of people who are no longer on the council and presumably to some extent freed from the ties of

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party loyalties. They help to explain why it is that, although many ex-councillors agree with many councillors that the work of local government could be better done without party politics, only a small proportion (14%) cited party politics as their reason for giving up the work. It was not for them the *major* irritant or cause for dissatisfaction.

Ex-councillors were much *less* likely than sitting councillors to believe that the public took a favourable view of the work of councils or of councillors. On the whole neither group believes that the public knows enough even to make proper use of council services, and they both feel this ignorance arises very largely out of lack of interest.

Does this feeling of public disinterest persuade people to give up council work? Insignificant numbers of ex-councillors cited public disinterest as their main reason for giving up, or mentioned it amongst the causes of frustration with the work, and yet it seems unlikely that willingness to give up private time in the public interest should not be affected by a felt lack of public interest. But we have shown in earlier chapters that, no matter what may be their views on the public, large proportions of all councillors, whatever their background or description are putting in very long hours on council work and the overall 'turnover' rate does not seem remarkably high. How do councillors themselves rank the various factors which we have been examining as possible deterrents to continuing council work?

Both councillors and ex-councillors rank 'the most serious problem' for local government in broadly the same way. Both think 'getting enough good people to stand' is the most serious problem and the time involved the next most serious. Public ignorance ranks third for sitting councillors but ex-councillors put party politics third. Younger ex-councillors rank 'time involved' somewhat lower than the older ones, and they also rank party politics much lower as a problem. They rank public ignorance higher.

When asked what was most important in discouraging potential candidates, both sitting and ex-councillors ranked 'time involved' highest. The effects on income or occupation were next most important but mentioned by smaller proportions. Party politics came next on the list for ex-councillors though only fourth for sitting councillors. The order, then, is:

What discourages people from standing?

	Ex-councillors	Councillors
Time involved	39	41
Effect on income	13	18
Party politics	12	7
Public ignorance	9	9
Bad public image	5	5

Aspects of the decision to stay

If we want to find out what kinds of councillor are likely to stay in public work, we need to get answers to a number of related questions: (a) a relevant one which has already been considered as a factor in working experience and may now be considered as a factor in staying or leaving is that of personal

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satisfaction (b) what are the intentions for future service of different types of sitting councillor? and (c) to what extent are these intentions actually carried out? The proportions of answers favouring staying which are given by those in different types of authority are shown in Table 10.12.

TABLE 10.12
Aspects of the decision to stay — by council type

	Counties	County boroughs	Metropolitan boroughs	Municipal boroughs & urban districts	Rural districts
	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank
Index of satisfaction with council work in relation to occupation	2	1	3	4	5
Intend to remain for a long while	2 =	1	2 =	5	4
'Staying rate'	1	2	5	4	3

In the county boroughs, where there is most satisfaction with council work, there is also the largest proportion intending to remain for a long while. The municipal boroughs, urban and rural districts, have the lowest proportions on these counts. The 'staying rate' is calculated as the opposite of the 'turnover rate' given in Chapter IX, i.e. it is the proportion of councillors who did *not* give up the work during a three-year period. It is thus a measure of the extent to which intentions to stay were carried out by different types of councillor. The only serious discrepancy between intentions to stay and staying rate is in the metropolitan boroughs, and the impending reorganisation may have had something to do with this.

Table 10.13 shows aspects of the decision to stay for the three age groups. Understandably, the older group is lowest on all counts. One would also expect the younger group to be the most likely to stay, and this is indeed true of their *intentions*. But they seem to be less satisfied with council work than the middle-aged group and their staying rate is lower.

TABLE 10.13
Aspects of the decision to stay — by age

	Under 45	45-64	65 & over
		Rank	Rank
Index of satisfaction with council work in relation to occupation	2	1	3
Intend to remain for a long while	1	2	3
'Staying rate'	2	1	3

The analysis by socio-economic groups (Table 10.14) shows that on all counts the manual workers are highest and the larger employers, managers and professionals lowest. That is, the manual workers are most satisfied with

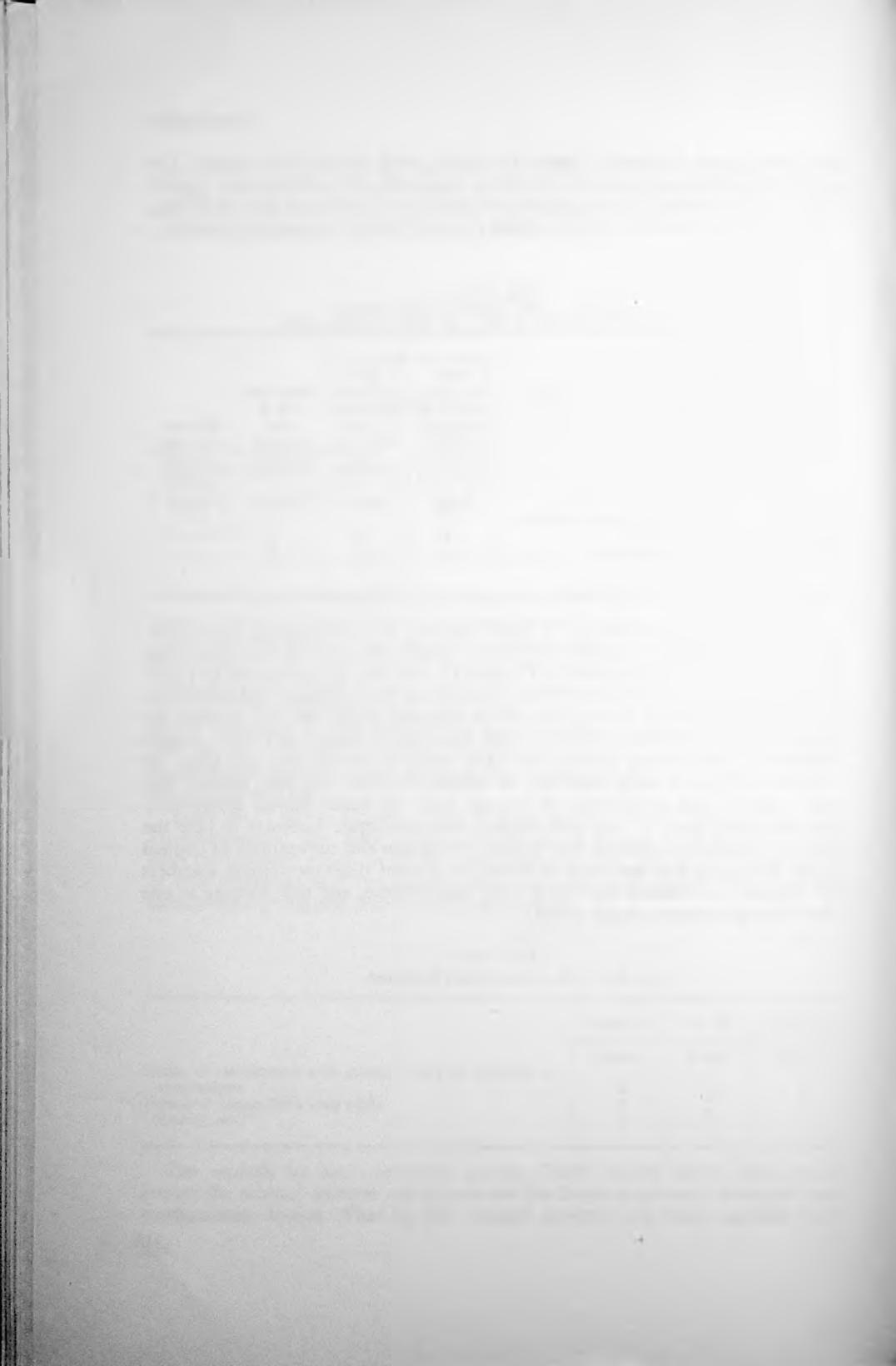
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the work, most frequently intend to remain, and actually do remain. The opposite applies to the larger employers, managers and professionals. Except for a slight tendency for the smaller employers and farmers to stay on longer, the non-manual workers occupy second position behind the manual workers.

TABLE 10.14
Aspects of the decision to stay — by socio-economic group

	Employers and managers with 25 or more sub- ordinates and pro- fessionals	Employers and managers with under 25 sub- ordinates and farmers	Non-man- ual & own account non-pro- fessionals	Manual and agri- cultural workers
	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank
Index of satisfaction with council work in relation to occupation	4	3	2	1
Intend to remain for a long while	4	3	2	1
'Staying rate'	4	3	3	1

What are the implications of these findings for encouraging councillors to stay in the work? It seems that council work is found to be most satisfying at middle age and, as suggested in Chapter IV, this may be partly due to a tendency for interest to turn away from occupational life and family responsibilities at this time of life. If councillors can be recruited young and can successfully surmount the difficulties, both in their own circumstances and their council experience, which arise during their early years of service, they are likely to remain for quite a long time. But, as indicated earlier, this may require that the realities and possibilities of council work be better known *before* they become councillors. It may also require more deliberate measures to help the younger councillor work his way into the procedures and conventions of council work during his first few years of office. At present disproportionate numbers of younger councillors leave after only short service, and this wastage is one that local government can ill afford.



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APPENDIX 2

SCHEDULES OF QUESTIONS

Ref. SS. 369/C

The Committees on the Management and
Staffing of Local Government,
Queen Anne's Chambers,
28 Broadway,
London, S.W.1.

13th November, 1964.

Dear Councillor,

I am writing to seek your help in a matter which I believe to be of great importance to the future of local government.

As you may know, the Minister of Housing and Local Government has set up, at the request of the main local authority Associations, a Committee to enquire into management in local government. This Committee, of which I am Chairman, is charged with considering how, in the light of modern conditions, local government can best continue to attract and retain people, both elected representatives and chief officers, of the calibre necessary to ensure its maximum effectiveness.

To provide an essential background to its enquiry, my Committee wishes to obtain an accurate and dependable description of the modern councillor and the contribution he makes to local government. We are fortunate in being able to call upon the services of the Government's social research organisation, the Social Survey, to undertake for my Committee a country-wide sample survey of councillors, a number of whom will be approached by post and invited to answer a written questionnaire, while others will be interviewed in person. It is hoped that these surveys will together provide a picture of the councillor and his work which will be invaluable to my Committee in considering the matters referred to it.

The results of these enquiries will, of course, depend entirely on the response of those elected representatives who are approached for this purpose. I am writing to all those Councillors whom the Social Survey, using well-tried sampling techniques, are asking to participate in the postal survey. You are one of these Councillors, and I would be most grateful if you would co-operate by completing and returning the enclosed questionnaire. This is in two parts: the first (pages 1 and 4) is designed to provide a background picture of the present day councillor; the second (the middle pages) seeks information about the councillor's part in the working of his Council with particular reference to the working of the committee system.

Appendix

I want to assure you that the answers to the questionnaire will be treated as strictly confidential. No names, either of individual councillors or of particular councils, will at any time be disclosed or associated with the results of my Committee's enquiry.

My Committee will be most grateful for your co-operation. Should you have any difficulties in completing the questionnaire, would you please get in touch with The Director, The Social Survey, Central Office of Information, Atlantic House, London, E.C.1. (Telephone number CITY 5744 ext. 591).

Yours sincerely,

JOHN MAUD,

Chairman,

Committee on Management in Local Government.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILLORS SURVEY

SS 369C

ALL INFORMATION WILL BE KEPT STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Important

This form is addressed to YOU as a member of

..... Council.
Please fill in the form yourself, and (except where otherwise indicated) with reference to this local authority only.

<p>Q 1 In which year did you first serve on this council? 19.....</p> <p>Q 2 How long altogether have you been on this council, leaving out any period when you were not a councillor or alderman? (count any part of a year as a year)..... yrs.</p> <p>Q 3 How old were you when you first served on this council?..... yrs.</p> <p>Q 4 When you first served on this council were you: (a) returned unopposed? <input type="checkbox"/> (b) opposed but elected? <input type="checkbox"/> (c) voted on as an alderman, chairman or mayor? <input type="checkbox"/> (d) co-opted during the war? <input type="checkbox"/> <small>(Please place tick in relevant box)</small> </p> <p>Q 5 At the last elections were you: (a) returned unopposed? <input type="checkbox"/> (b) opposed but elected? <input type="checkbox"/> (c) voted on as an alderman, chairman or mayor? <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Q 6a Are you now a member of any other council? <small>(Please place tick in relevant box)</small> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> b IF YES: Give full name(s): council council</p> <p>Q 7a Have you ever been a member of any other council, apart from those of which you are now a member? <small>(Please place tick in relevant box)</small> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> b IF YES: Give full name(s): council council</p>	<table border="1" style="margin-bottom: 10px;"> <tr><td>Off. use only</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Card (!)</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>16</td><td>Q 8 Are you:</td></tr> <tr><td>17</td><td>single? <input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td>18</td><td>married? <input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> <tr><td>19</td><td>separated/widowed? <input type="checkbox"/></td></tr> </table> <p>(Please place tick in relevant box)</p> <p>Q 9 Are you: male? <input type="checkbox"/> female? <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Q 10 What was your age last birthday?..... yrs</p> <p>Q 11 Do you live in this council area? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> <small>IF YES</small> b How long have you lived in this council area?..... yrs</p> <p>Q 12 Were you born in this council area? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Q 13 Please say about your present address, whether it is: (a) your own property (including mortgaged property) <input type="checkbox"/> (b) rented (private) <input type="checkbox"/> (c) rented (council or new town corporation) <input type="checkbox"/> (d) rentfree <input type="checkbox"/> <small>(Please place tick in relevant box)</small></p> <p>Q 14 (a) How many people, including yourself, live in your household? 39 (b) How many of these are under school age? 40 (c) How many of these are attending school or other place of full-time education? 41 (d) How many, including yourself, are in paid employment? 42 <small>(Please write in numbers. If the answer to any of the above is "none" put "0" on the relevant line)</small></p>	Off. use only		Card (!)		16	Q 8 Are you:	17	single? <input type="checkbox"/>	18	married? <input type="checkbox"/>	19	separated/widowed? <input type="checkbox"/>	<table border="1"> <tr><td>Off. use only</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Card (!)</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>30</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>1</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>31</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>1</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>32</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>33</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>34</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>1</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>35</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>36</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>37</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>1</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>38</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>1</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>39</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>40</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>41</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>42</td><td></td></tr> </table>	Off. use only		Card (!)		30		1		2		3		31		1		2		32		33		34		1		2		3		4		35		36		37		1		2		38		1		2		3		4		39		40		41		42	
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HOW TO FILL IN THE TABLE BELOW

Time spent on Council Committees Work

A separate "time sheet" should be used for each council of which you are a member. Continuation sheets are included. Do not forget to put the name of the relevant authority on the top of each sheet.

Col. 1 Please write in the name of each committee or sub-committee of which you are now a member.

Col. 2 Ring the appropriate code numbers, as shown in the example, for each committee or sub-committee mentioned and for the full council meeting.

Col. 3 and **4** Committee and for the full council meeting.

Col. 5 Preparation means the average time spent reading papers, holding party discussions, or any other necessary work done for this particular Committee.

Col. 6 Preparation means the average time spent for a meeting of the particular committee. We are trying to break down total time spent into headings:

At meeting means the average time actually spent at the meeting. The average of several recent meetings (excluding recess periods) would serve here.

Col. 7	Travelling means all the time taken on average to get to and from meetings or other business connected with the particular committee between one meeting and the next.
Col. 8	All other activities mean everything connected with the particular committee not accounted

Col. 9 Please give the number of meetings of each committee that you attended in the last 6 months.

Off, Use only	Card (1)	
Q 15 The columns on Page 3 ask you to tell the time you spend on average on the work of council committees and on the full council. Apart from this, would you say how much time you spend in the average month on:	43 44	
(a) Dealing with electors' problems	..... hrs per month	
(b) Taking part in organizations on which you represent the council	..... hrs per month	
(c) Taking part in the work of any other public bodies on which you do not represent the council	..... hrs per month	
(d) Any other way(s) in which you spend time as part of the work of being a councillor* (please specify)..... ..... ..... .....	..... hrs per month	
	45 46	
	47	
	48	
	49 50	
	51	
* If for any reason, it is difficult to work out a monthly average or if there are some activities which do not fit into the above categories, please describe these activities briefly and give your best estimate of the time you spend on them yearly.		
Q 16 To those on the Greater London Council or New London Boroughs: Have you had to reduce the time spent on committee meetings and other activities in your present area in order to make time for preparatory work on these?		
	1	
	2	
	3	
(Please place tick in relevant box)		
If Reduction: By how much have you reduced your normal average time spent in any month on committees or activities of your present council?		
	52 53	
	End Card	

If Reduction: By how much have you reduced your normal average time spent in any month on committees or activities of your present council? hrs

How to fill this in—please read Notes above.

TIME SPENT ON COUNCIL COMMITTEE WORK

Name of Council.....

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Name of Committee or Sub-Committee (wherever possible, put sub-committees immediately after their main committee)	Whether Main Committee (1) or Sub- Committee (2)	Are you Chairman (1) or Vice- Chairman (1), or Member (2); or Member (3)?	Unusual Starting Times: 2 p.m. (5) 2 p.m.-2.30 p.m. (6) After 6.00 p.m. (8)	Time spent on average at each meeting	Time spent on preparation, Reading papers, party groups, personnel, commit- tee work, research on average	Time spent on all traveling to and from meetings connected with the Committee on average	Time spent on all other activities of this Committee between one meeting and the next on average	Time spent on all traveling to and from meetings connected with the Committee on average	How many meetings have you attended in the last six months?
(Example only) sub-Committee X	1 (7)	4	5 6 (7) 8	2 hrs 45 mins	2 hrs 0 mins	1 hr 15 mins	1 hr 30 mins	4	
(1) The whole Council	—	3 4	5 6 7 8	hrs mins	hrs mins	hrs hrs	hrs hrs	mins mins	
(2)	1 2	3 4	5 6 7 8	hrs mins	hrs mins	hrs hrs	hrs hrs	mins mins	
(3)	1 2	3 4	5 6 7 8	hrs mins	hrs mins	hrs hrs	hrs hrs	mins mins	
(4)	1 2	3 4	5 6 7 8	hrs mins	hrs mins	hrs hrs	hrs hrs	mins mins	
(5)	1 2	3 4	5 6 7 8	hrs mins	hrs mins	hrs hrs	hrs hrs	mins mins	
(6)	1 2	3 4	5 6 7 8	hrs mins	hrs mins	hrs hrs	hrs hrs	mins mins	
(7)	1 2	3 4	5 6 7 8	hrs mins	hrs mins	hrs hrs	hrs hrs	mins mins	
(8)	1 2	3 4	5 6 7 8	hrs mins	hrs mins	hrs hrs	hrs hrs	mins mins	
(9)	1 2	3 4	5 6 7 8	hrs mins	hrs mins	hrs hrs	hrs hrs	mins mins	
(10)	1 2	3 4	5 6 7 8	hrs mins	hrs mins	hrs hrs	hrs hrs	mins mins	
(11)	1 2	3 4	5 6 7 8	hrs mins	hrs mins	hrs hrs	hrs hrs	mins mins	
(12)	1 2	3 4	5 6 7 8	hrs mins	hrs mins	hrs hrs	hrs hrs	mins mins	

Use the continuation sheet if necessary.

Please turn now to p. 4.

Off. use only	Card (16	Off. use only	Card (16
Q 17 Please indicate your employment situation:		Q 23 Please place a tick in the box against the type of full-time school you last attended:	
(a) usually work over 30 hrs a week	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	(d) Elementary/secondary modern/church/other non-grammar type of state school	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
(b) usually work, but 30 hrs a week or less	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	(b) Central / Intermediate / Higher Grade/Tech. school or college (up to 18 yrs)	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
(c) housewife—not working	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	(c) State grammar type school/ County High/Senior Secondary ...	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
(d) never in paid employment	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	(d) Public (fee-paying) / Private (Grammar) school	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
(e) retired	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	(e) Commercial school/college	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
(Please place tick in relevant box)			
Q 18 Please describe your paid occupation below. If you are retired or a housewife give your last main occupation when working. If never in a paid occupation nor self-employed please say so.		Q 24 At what age did you leave the above school? 33 34	
Occupation/job title:	17	Q 25 Apart from the above school, have you received any of the following kinds of further education? Tick all that apply. If none, tick the first box.	
The Industry in which you work(ed):	18	(a) No further education	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
(a) Is this a nationalised industry/public body?	19	(b) Correspondence course/evening classes	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
YES	20	(c) Poly/Tech. Coll./Teacher Training	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
NO	21	(d) University	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Q 19 TO THOSE NO LONGER IN A PAID OCCUPATION: In what year did you leave your last employment? 19.....		Q 26 If further education above was full-time, at what age did this finish? .....yrs 38 39	
(a) Were you self-employed at that time?	22	Q 27 Have you obtained any of the following qualifications? Place a tick in one box only, for highest qualification obtained:	
YES	23	(a) No qualification obtained	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
NO		(b) Full industrial apprenticeship	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Q 20 TO THOSE NOW IN A PAID OCCUPATION:		(c) G.C.E. "O" level/Matriculation/ General School Certificate/Ordinary National Certificate/Diploma, City and Guilds	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Are you self-employed?	24	(d) G.C.E. "A" level/Higher School Certificate/Intermediate/H.N.C./ Diploma	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
YES	1	(e) Teachers' Certificate, Membership of a professional institute/ full or intermediate professional qualification	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
NO	2	(f) University degree/full medical training	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Q 21 Are you now (or, if retired, were you) directly or indirectly in control of or responsible for other people's work?		Q 28 What is your approximate net* income from all sources? £ Yearly or £ Weekly	
YES	25	Nil	<input type="checkbox"/> 0
NO	26	Up to 260	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
(a) IF YES: How many people?	27-30	Over 260- 520	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
(a) Do you normally work:	31	Over 520- 780	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
(a) in this council area?	1	Over 780-1,040	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
(b) less than 5 miles outside boundary?	2	Over 1,040-1,300	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
(c) 5 or more miles outside boundary?	3	Over 1,300-1,560	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
(Please place tick in relevant box)			
* Net Income means after income tax and insurance has been deducted but including benefits and overtime.			
† Important. If you are a married woman please give your husband's income only.			

Councillor's Name.....	L.A.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	8 10
LAA for which he is being interviewed.....	Region	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	11
Interviewer.....	Size	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	12
Date of interview.....	Indiv.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	13 14
No. of calls made.....	G.L.C.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	15
Reason for non-interview.....	Interviewer No.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	16 18
Total time interview took.....					

INTRODUCTION:

(to those who filled in the postal)

I am --- from the Government Social Survey. We are carrying out a survey of local government councillors on behalf of the Sir John Maud Committee, and you have already been kind enough to give us some information on a postal questionnaire. May I now ask some further questions which are best put in a personal interview.

(to those who were sent the postal, but did not return it completed)

I am --- from the Government Social Survey. We are carrying out a survey of local government councillors on behalf of the Sir John Maud Committee. I believe that a postal questionnaire was sent to you a couple of months ago, but we do not seem to have had a reply from you. May I first ask a few factual questions about your council service and personal background (ASK QUESTIONS 1-14 and 17-26 on the postal schedule).

FOR INFORMANTS WHO DID NOT ANSWER THE POSTAL, OMIT SECTION 'A' BELOW (QS 1-4) AND START WITH SECTION 'B'

<input type="checkbox"/>	19
<input type="checkbox"/>	20

SECTION 'A' - NON-COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

On the postal enquiry we asked councillors to give us some information about their council committee work. But councillors have many other activities, and we should like to show the full range of their public and social contacts.

Q 1 Do you belong to (or spend time on) any organizations, groups or clubs at the present time? (SHOW CARD, AND RECORD UNDER EACH HEADING THE NAMES (one line each) OF ANY THE COUNCILLOR BELONGS TO).

a (For all organizations, etc. under headings A-G inclusive, where appropriate):

- (i) How old were you when you first joined?
- (ii) Did you join it before or after becoming a councillor?
- (iii) Do you officially represent the council on it?

(For any organizations, etc. under headings H, I or J ask (i) only)

CARD 0

	OFF, USE ONLY	(I) HOW OLD WHEN FIRST JOINED	(II) JOINED BE- FORE/AFTER BECOMING COUNCILLOR	(III) OFFICIALLY REPRESENT COUNCIL ON IT	
		()	()	()	YES NO
<u>A</u> ORGANIZATIONS CONNECTED WITH YOUR WORK: prompt: trade union (1) anything else (2)					
		YES	1 2	3 4	21*
		YES	1 2	3 4	22*
		YES	1 2	3 4	23*
<u>B</u> PUBLIC BODIES OR COMMITTEES: e.g. statutory committees boards of governors					
		YES	1 2	3 4	24*
		YES	1 2	3 4	25*
		YES	1 2	3 4	26*
		YES	1 2	3 4	27*
		YES	1 2	3 4	28*
		YES	1 2	3 4	29*
		YES	1 2	3 4	30*
		YES	1 2	3 4	31*
<u>C</u> ORGANIZATIONS CONNECTED WITH POLITICS: prompt: pol. party (1) anything else (2)					
		YES	1 2	3 4	32*
		YES	1 2	3 4	33*
		YES	1 2	3 4	34*
<u>D</u> ORGANIZATIONS CONNECTED WITH EDUCATION OR TRAINING: (e.g. further education, youth training, nursing, first aid)					
		YES	1 2	3 4	35*
		YES	1 2	3 4	36*
		YES	1 2	3 4	37*
		YES	1 2	3 4	38*
		YES	1 2	3 4	39*
<u>E</u> CHURCH OR RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS: e.g. religious bodies church clubs					
		YES	1 2	3 4	40*
		YES	1 2	3 4	41*

		(I)	(II)	(III)	CARD XNP
E ORGANIZATIONS CONNECTED WITH WELFARE e.g. charitable organizations					
	YES	1	2	3	4
	YES	1	2	3	4
	YES	1	2	3	4
	YES	1	2	3	4
	YES	1	2	3	4
	YES	1	2	3	4
G CIVIC OR COMMUNITY GROUPS: e.g. tenants', ratepayers' or consumers' associations					
	YES	1	2	3	4
	YES	1	2	3	4
	YES	1	2	3	4
	YES	1	2	3	4
	YES	1	2	3	4
H GROUPS CONNECTED WITH LEISURE e.g. clubs for sport, cultural activities					CARD 2 8- 10 11- 13 14- 16 17- 19
	YES				
J ANY OTHER SOCIAL CLUB: e.g. working men's, women's, old people's, ex-service					2- 22 23- 25 26- 28
	YES				
	YES				
	YES				
K ANYTHING ELSE NOT COVERED:					29- 31 32- 34
	YES				
	YES				

Q 2 How much time do you spend on all these organizations in the average month?	Hours	35- 36
	D.K.	1
Q 3 Taking all these activities together, would you say that <u>on the whole</u> you spend less or more or about the same time on them as before you became a councillor?	More Less Same	1 2 37 3
a IF MORE: How many hours more each month on average?	Hours	35- 36
Is this because of your council duties or through personal or other interest?	Council duties Personal or other interest	1 2 40
b IF LESS: How many hours less each month on average?	Hours	1- 2
Is this because of your council duties or personal or other reasons?	Council duties Personal or other reasons	1 2 43
Q 4 TO ALL WHO HAVE BEEN ELECTED TO GREATER LONDON COUNCIL OR TO THE NEW RECONSTITUTED BOROUGH IN THE G.L.C. AREA: As a result of preparatory work for the G.L.C./new borough are you now spending more or less time than normally on your non-council organizations?	D.N.A. More Less Same D.K.	B 1 2 44 3 4
a IF MORE OR LESS: How much (more or less) per month on average?	Hours	1- 2 46

SECTION 'B' - BECOMING A COUNCILLOR

The main purpose of this survey is to help find out how enough suitable people can be brought into local government. It would be useful to know how you yourself became a councillor.

Q 5 Was your family associated with council work in this area or in any other area before you became a councillor?

	CARD 2
This area	1
Another area	2
Not associated	3

Q 6 Before you became a councillor, were any of your friends associated with council work in this or any other area?

	CARD 18
This area	1
Another area	2

Q 7 How many of your friends now live in (LAA)?

RUNNING PROMPT	All	4	
	Most	3	19
	Half or less	2	
	None	1	

Q 8 TO THOSE WHO ANSWERED THE POSTAL SCHEDULE:

You have told me about your other activities apart from council committee work. Was it because of these activities that you first came into contact with people connected with council work? (SHOW CARD AGAIN)

Yes	1	50
No	2	

TO THOSE WHO DID NOT ANSWER THE POSTAL SCHEDULE: Most councillors have activities apart from council committee work (SHOW CARD). Was it your connection with these kinds of activities before you became a councillor which first brought you into contact with people connected with council work?

Yes	1	51
No	2	

2 TO ALL ANSWERING YES: Which?

52

3 TO ALL ANSWERING NO: How were you brought into touch with council work?

53

54

<u>Q.9</u>	When you <u>first</u> considered standing for the council, was it your own idea or were you asked to do so by some person or organization?	Own idea Was asked to stand	PASS 2 DRAFT 1 55 2
a	IF ASKED TO STAND:		
(i)	Who asked you to stand?		56
(ii)	When you were first asked to stand, how well did you know those who asked you?	RUNNING PROMPT	Very well Fairly well Slightly
(iii)	Why do you think you were asked?		58
(iv)	At the time when you were first asked, had you given much thought to getting on the council, thought a little about it, or never considered it?		Had thought much Had thought a little Never considered it
<u>Q.10</u>	How old were you when you were first asked to stand (or put yourself forward)?	yrs	50 51
<u>Q.11</u>	Did you accept (or were you accepted) almost at once, within a year, or after a year?		Almost at once Within a year After a year
<u>Q.12</u>	When you were making up your mind to stand, what was the <u>main</u> thing which influenced your decision?		63
<u>Q.13</u>	Looking back at it now, how much do you think you really knew about the work of a councillor when you first stood - not much, something, or quite a lot?		Not much Something Quite a lot
			64 65 66 CABO 2 ENDS

Q 14 IF CODE 1 OR 2 TO Q13: What was the main thing you now realize that
IF CODE 3 TO Q13 : Was there anything you did not know or understand at that time?

CARD
3

8

Q 15 Since becoming a councillor, apart from the experience you get during the course of your council work, have you been able to take any steps to acquire special knowledge that might be useful in doing it?

Yes 1
No 2

9

a IF YES: What steps?
(PROMPT: If taken courses, specify.)

10

Q 16 Should training courses for councillors be compulsory for all, voluntary for those who wish to attend them, or are they not needed?

Compulsory 1
Voluntary 2
Not needed 3
D.K. 4

11

Q 17 TO THOSE WHO ARE MEMBERS OF A POLITICAL PARTY (Q.1):
You say that you joined the political party when you were (- yrs).

a Can I check? Was this some time before you were first stood for the council, about the same time, or well after?

Some time before 1
About, the same time 2
Well after 3

12

b At what age would you say you first became interested in politics?

yrs 13-
14

Q 18 TO ALL Are you a member of the majority group on the council, the main opposition group, another group, or would you consider yourself independent of any group?

(NOTE: The majority group may consist of people who call themselves 'independent')

Majority group 1
Main opposition group 2
Other group 3
Independent 4

15

Q 19 How much did it cost the last time you stood for election?
(never stood) D.N.A.

E 16-
18

D.K. Y

19-
21

a Of this total, how much was contributed by others?

E 22-
24

D.K. Y

25

b And how much did you have to find yourself?

SECTION 'C' - COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

Now I'd like to talk about the activities of the council and the part you take in them.

		CASE	
<u>Q 20</u>	Under the present system, are you able to spend as much time on <u>all</u> aspects of the council's work as you think is needed, or do some aspects not get enough attention?	Enough time for all Not enough time for some	1 26 2
<u>a</u>	IF SOME ASPECTS DO NOT GET ENOUGH ATTENTION: Which?		27
<u>Q 21</u>	If more time is (were) needed for some aspects of the work, could it be found by changing present procedures or only by increasing the total time spent?	Changing procedures Increasing total time D.K.	1 28 2 3
<u>a</u>	IF CHANGING PROCEDURES: In what way?		29
<u>Q 22</u>	Could more time be found without seriously harming the council's work in any of the following ways?	Spending less time on party debate IND. PROMPT Leaving more detailed work to officials to allow council to deal with policy Each councillor to sit on fewer committees Other (specify)	Yes 2 No 1 X D.K. 1 Yes 1 No 2 31 D.K. 3 Yes 1 No 2 32 D.K. 3 Yes 1 No 2 33 D.K. 3
<u>Q 23</u>	Have you specialized in any particular aspects of the council's work, or do you try to spread your time equally over all the work in which you are involved?	Try to equal attention Specialize	1 34 2
<u>a</u>	IF SPECIALIZE: In what aspects do you specialize?		35
<u>Q 24</u>	Are the committees you are on now those which interest you most or where you feel you can do most good, or would you prefer to change some of them (if you could)?	Present committees ones which interest most Present committees where you feel you can do most good Would prefer to change some	1 36 2 3

Q 25 On which committee do you think you have been most effective in getting things done or the right decisions made?

CARD
3
38-
39

a Are there any special reasons for this?

DO NOT PROMPT
CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Special knowledge 1
Special interest 2
Long experience of committee work 3 40
Great need in area 4
More useful or rewarding 5
No special reason 6
Other (specify) 7

X/0

41

42

43

Q 26 On which committee do you think you have not been as effective as you would like?

44

45

a Are there any special reasons for this?

DO NOT PROMPT
CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Not been on committee long enough/had insufficient time 1
Insufficient knowledge of subject 2
No interest in subject 3 46
Cannot get views across/in minority/not enough power 4
Other (specify) 5

X/0

46

47

IF MORE THAN ONE REASON: Which one of these is the main reason? Code

48

49

Q 27 Would you say that proper weight is given to all points of view in the decisions made in council or committee at present, or that some individuals or any group has too much influence or power?

Proper weight given to all 1 50
Some individuals have too much power 2
A group has too much power 3

a IF SOME INDIVIDUALS: Which?

51

IF A GROUP: Which?

52

53

<u>Q 28</u> 0	In your opinion, which <u>one</u> of all the activities or décisions of the council during 1964 has done most to help people or improve things in (LAA)?				
DO NOT PROMPT	Utility services	1			
	Housing	2			
	Roads and traffic	3			
	Town planning/redevelopment	4	54		
	Education	5			
	Recreational and social facilities	6			
	Welfare services (<u>specify</u>)	7			
	Other (<u>specify</u>)	9	55		
	D.K. which one None	0			
		Y	56		
<u>Q 29</u> 0	In your opinion, is enough being done by the council to help people and improve things in (LAA) or should more be done?				
	Enough	1	57		
	More	2			
	Enough in some ways, more should be done in others	3			
	D.K.	4			
<u>Q 30</u> 0	Is there any <u>one</u> particular problem in (LAA) which you think will require a great deal of attention by the council in the next year or so?				
DO NOT PROMPT	Town planning/redevelopment/overspill	1			
	Housing/slum clearance	2			
	Traffic schemes/road improvements	3	58		
	Sewerage system/water supply	4			
	Local government reorganisation	5			
	Education/further education	6			
	Other (<u>specify</u>)	7			
			59		
<u>Q 31</u> 0	As a result of your actual experience, which personal characteristics do you think are necessary to make a good councillor?				
			60		
				61	

SECTION 'D' - ATTITUDES TOWARDS COUNCIL EXPERIENCE

The Maud Committee is very interested in getting the views of councillors themselves on their council experience. Could I now ask you how you feel about some aspects of council work?

Q 32 Q Looking back on the time you have spent so far as a councillor, what are the things which have given you most satisfaction?

(PROBE - If general answer such as 'helping people' or 'getting the right decisions made' - in what connection?)

CARD
3

62

63

64

a IF MORE THAN ONE: Of the things you've mentioned, which one did you find most rewarding?

(underline above)

Q 33 Q And what are the things which you found most frustrating or unsatisfactory?

65

a IF MORE THAN ONE: Of the things you've mentioned, which one did you find most frustrating or unsatisfactory?

(underline above)

66

Q 34 Which of these two aspects of council work do you prefer: making the broad policy decisions, or dealing with the problems of particular individuals?

Policy decisions	1	67
Particular individuals	2	
Both	3	
D.K.	4	

Q 35 Taking everything into account, do you feel at present that you would like to remain on the council for a long time, to give it up after a while, or to give it up in the near future?

Would like to remain	1	68
Give it up after a while	2	
Give it up in near future	3	
D.K.	4	

69

Q 36 Is there any one thing which might make you eventually decide to give it up?

CARD

70

Q 37 Has your own private life suffered in any way or has it been helped as a result of your being on the council?

Suffered	1	71
Helped	2	
Helped some ways and suffered others	3	
Made no difference	4	

Q 38 TO THOSE NOW WORKING OR HAVING WORKED WHILE A COUNCILLOR:
Has (did) being a councillor affect(ed) your relations with people involved in your daily occupation?

D.N.A.	B	72
Yes	1	
No	2	

O a IF YES: Did it affect these relations for the better or for the worse?
(PROBE and record verbatim)

For the better	1	73
For the worse	2	
A mixture of the two	3	

74

Q 39 Would you say that being a councillor has given you the opportunity of using abilities which otherwise you would not have used?

Yes	1	75
No	2	
D.K.	3	

O a IF YES: In what way?

76

Q 40 Would you say that on the whole you get more satisfaction out of your council work or out of your normal daily occupation?

DO NOT PROMPT	D.N.A.	B	77
	Council work more satisfying	1	
	Enjoy both	2	
	Occupation more satisfying	3	
	D.K.	4	

78

ANSWER
308

Could I now ask one or two questions about payment for council activities?

Q 41 Do you now claim for any of the following: (see below, left)

a Would you say that the allowances for these items are adequate or should they be increased? (IF INFORMANT NOT NOW ELIGIBLE BUT THINKS HE SHOULD BE, RECORD BELOW)

	CLAIM			(a) ALLOWANCES		Not now eligible - should be	CARD No.
	Always (nearly) times	Some- times	Never	Adequate	Should be increased		
(i) Loss of pay	1	2	3	4	5	6	8
(ii) Subsistence	1	2	3	4	5	6	9
(iii) Travelling expenses	1	2	3	4	5	6	10
(iv) Stationery, telephone	1	2	3	4	5	6	11

b IF SOMETIMES OR NEVER CLAIMED: Why not always?

12

Q 42 Apart from allowances, do you think that all members of councils should be paid a salary or fee, none of them, or only some of them?

All	1	13
None	2	
Some	3	

a IF 'SOME OF THEM': Which?

14

b IF ALL OR SOME: How much should they be paid?

15

c TO ALL: Why do you think they ^{should} ~~should not~~ be paid?

16

As you know, councils are given certain duties by Act of Parliament and they also have permissive powers to provide some services if they choose to do so.

Q 43 O Do you feel that at present your council makes as much use as it can of all the power and authority which it has?

Yes, full use	1	17
No, full use not made	2	
Yes in some cases, no in others	3	
D.K.	4	

a IF 'SOME POWERS NOT FULLY USED' (2 or 3): What are your reasons for saying this?

18

19

Q 44 Does your council need more powers of any sort than it now has?

Yes	1	140
No	2	2
D.K.	3	

O a IF YES: For what purposes?

DO NOT PROMPT
CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Housing	1	M/0
Roads	2	
Education	3	
Hospitals	4	21
Building	5	
Rating	6	
To take major decisions generally	7	
Others (specify)	8	

22

Q 45 Do you think that the central government puts any unnecessary limitations on the freedom of your council to act as it wants to?

Yes	1	23
No	2	
D.K.	3	

O a IF YES: In what way?

24

Q 46 DO NOT PUT THE FOLLOWING QUESTION TO COUNTY BOROUGH OR COUNTY COUNCIL COUNCILLORS.

Do you think that the County Council puts any unnecessary limitations on the freedom of your council to act as it wants to?

Yes	1	25
No	2	
D.K.	3	

O a IF YES: In what way?

26

When considering new or developing needs of the people, councils can sometimes leave it to voluntary organisations to develop the services required or they can develop the services themselves.

Q 47a Does it seem to you that there are any advantages for councils in using voluntary organizations to meet such needs?

Yes, advantages	1	
No	2	27
D.K.	3	

O (ii) IF YES: What are the advantages?

28

b Are there any disadvantages?

Yes, disadvantages	1	
No	2	28
D.K.	3	

O (ii) IF YES: What are the disadvantages?

29

30

31

Q 48a So on the whole what do you think would be the best way to meet new and developing needs of the people in this area? Would it be best for (RUNNING PROMPT) the Council to provide all services the Council to help voluntary organizations provide some services or voluntary organizations to meet most new needs?

D.K.

	5
1	32
2	
3	

b IF 2 OR 3: for what kinds of services are voluntary organizations most suitable?

DO NOT PROMPT
CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Old people's welfare	M/C
Meals-on-wheels	1
Help for the blind/handicapped	2
Youth clubs/services	3
Recreational/cultural facilities	4
Advisory services	5
Nothing in particular	6
Others (specify)	33
	7
	8

	33
	34

Q 49 Previous studies have shown that in some areas some sections of the population are not well represented on the council. Would you say that the members of your own council are a good cross section of the people in this area, or not?

Yes, good cross section
No, some not represented
D.K.

1	
2	35
3	

c IF NO: Which groups do you feel are not well represented?

DO NOT PROMPT
CODE ALL THAT APPLY

Professional/managerial people	M/C
Working class people	1
Younger people	2
Women	3
Specific political groups	4
Business people/traders	5
D.K.	6
Others (specify)	36
	7
	8

	36
	37

Q 50 Would you say that any of the following groups are not sufficiently represented? (IF ALREADY MENTIONED IN ANSWER TO Q49, RECORD HERE BUT DO NOT REPEAT)

IND.
PROMPT

Professional/managerial people	Yes 1	No 2	D.K. 3	38
Working class people	Yes 1	No 2	D.K. 3	39
Younger people under 40	Yes 1	No 2	D.K. 3	40
Women	Yes 1	No 2	D.K. 3	41
Specific political groups	Yes 1	No 2	D.K. 3	42
Business people/traders	Yes 1	No 2	D.K. 3	43

	38
	39
	40
	41
	42
	43
	44

There are many differing opinions on the place of party politics in local government. If I may, I'd like to ask what you think about this.

Q.51 a It is sometimes said that it is essential for a candidate to have the support of a party organization in order to get elected.
Do you personally think that is true in this area?

	CARD	4
Yes	1	
No	2	
D.K.	3	45

b IF YES TO a: (REFER BACK TO Q.31). Earlier I asked you which characteristics you thought made a good councillor. You said ----- . Does the fact that candidates have to be supported by a party organization make it more or less likely that such people will be chosen as candidates, or does it make no difference?

More likely	1	46
Makes no difference	2	
Less likely	3	

Q.52 Does the fact that many councillors are attached to political groups affect the main work of your council?

Does not affect this council	1	
Affects some of the work	2	47
Affects all of the work	3	
D.K.	4	

O a IF 2 or 3: In what way does it affect the work?

48

Q.53 Would you say that on the whole the party system is essential to the work of councils or that the work could be done better without it?

Essential	2	
Better without it	1	48
D.K.	A	
Other (specify)	B	.

O a What are your reasons for saying this?

50

51

SECTION 'E' - COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS AND RECRUITMENT

Q 54 Taking everything into account would you say about co-option that you were:

RUNNING PROMPT	In favour	Against
	1	52
	2	
	3	
	4	
		D.K.

O a What are your main reasons for saying this?

CARD
4

53

Q 55 Some authorities have chairmen instead of mayors. Is this likely to affect:

<u>a</u> The willingness of suitable candidates to stand for election?	Yes	1	54
	No	2	
	D.K.	3	
			55

O IF YES: In what way?

54

2

3

b Do you think it affects the public standing of such councils?

Yes	1	56
No	2	
D.K.	3	

O IF YES: What are your reasons for saying this?

56

2

3

57

Q 56 Some authorities do not have aldermen. Is this likely to affect:

<u>a</u> The willingness of suitable candidates to stand for election?	Yes	1	58
	No	2	
	D.K.	3	
			59

O IF YES: In what way?

58

2

3

59

b Is the absence of aldermen likely to affect the work of such councils?

Yes	1	
No	2	60
D.K.	3	

O IF YES: In what way?

1

2

3

60

c And would the absence of aldermen affect the public standing of such councils?

Yes	1	
No	2	62
D.K.	3	

O IF YES: What are your reasons for saying this?

1

2

3

61

62

3

63

64

<u>Q 57</u>	Do you think that there should be a compulsory retiring age for council members?	Yes No D.K.	4 65 3
	<u>a</u> IF YES: What should it be?		66
<u>Q 58</u>	Do you think that there should be a limit to the length of time an individual may serve as a mayor or chairman of the council?	Yes No D.K.	1 67 3
	<u>a</u> IF YES: What should that limit be?		68
<u>Q 59</u>	Do you think that there should be a limit to the length of time an individual may serve as a chairman of the same committee?	Yes No D.K.	.1 2 3
	<u>a</u> IF YES: What should that limit be?		70
<u>Q 60</u>	Bearing in mind what you consider to be the right kind of candidate, do you think there is a great deal of difficulty in this area in getting enough of these people to stand, or not much difficulty?	Great deal of difficulty Not much difficulty D.K.	1 2 3
<u>Q 61</u>	Do you personally know any people who in recent years could have made good councillors but who would not stand?	Yes No	1 2
	<u>J</u> IF YES: Why do you think they would not stand? PROBE and underline most important		7
<u>Q 62</u>	Do you know of any people in recent years who have given up council work?	Yes No	1 2
	<u>O</u> IF YES: Why do you think they gave it up? PROBE and underline most important		7

CARD
4
END

We have been discussing many aspects of council work and their effects. Could we now try to sum it up. (SHOW CARD)

Q 63 Here are the main headings. May I first ask you if, in your opinion they raise problems for local government at the present time or if, taking everything into account, they do not?

READ LIST SLOWLY, RECORD ANSWERS TO EACH PART AND THEN ASK:

Q 64 Which one of these, in your opinion, raises the most serious problem?

Q 65 And now, if you consider the constant need to recruit good people, do you think suitable people are put off standing for the council by these matters or not?

READ LIST AGAIN SLOWLY, RECORD ANSWERS TO EACH PART AND THEN ASK:

Q 66 Which one of these is most important in discouraging people from standing?

	Q 63		Q 65		CAND S
	Raise problems	Do not raise problems	People put off	People not put off	
1. Party politics	2	1	4	3	8
2. Feeling that councils don't have enough power	1	2	3	4	9
3. Public ignorance of work of councils	1	2	3	4	10
4. Bad public image of councillors	1	2	3	4	11
5. Time involved in council work	1	2	3	4	12
6. Effects of council work on personal income or occupation	1	2	3	4	13
7. Increasing responsibility and knowledge needed to do work effectively	1	2	3	4	14
8. Getting sufficiently good officials and staff to work with council	1	2	3	4	15
9. Getting all sections of the public properly represented on the council	1	2			16
10. Getting enough good people to stand for council	1	2			17
Most important, code no. (1-10) Q 64		16-19	Q 66		20-21

IF SOMETHING ELSE REGARDED AS MOST IMPORTANT (A) IN RAISING PROBLEMS OR (B) IN PUTTING PEOPLE OFF, RECORD HERE:

	22
	23

SECTION 'F' - COUNCILS AND THE PUBLIC

And now some questions about the general public and councils.

Q 67 How would you describe the attitude of the general public to the work of the council in this area? Are they on the whole:

Favourable	CARD 5
Unfavourable	1
or not interested?	24
D.K.	3
	4

Q 68 Would you describe the public's attitude towards councillors as

Favourable	1
Unfavourable	2
or not interested?	25
	3

Q 69 Is there any comment you would like to add on this?

Q 69 Speaking for yourself, what are the main ways you get to know about the needs and attitudes of members of the public?

Informal personal contacts

Formal approaches/letters

Meeting people through voluntary organizations

During election campaigns/canvassing

Through political parties

Reports of heads of council departments

Special organizations set up for the purpose

Local press

Others (specify)

N/C

1

2

3

4

28

5

6

7

8

9

29

a IF MORE THAN ONE WAY: Of the ones you've mentioned, which is the main way?

CODE

30

31

Q 70 During the last 4 weeks how many of the people in this area have been in touch with you as a member of the council?
(IF NONE, PUT '0')

Called at your home

32-

33

Visited their homes

34-

35

Spoken to on telephone

36-

37

Received letters from

38-

39

Other ways

40-

41

D.K.

Y

Q 71 How much time would you say you have spent with these people as a member of the council in the last 4 weeks?

Hours

42-

43

D.K.

Y

44

Q 72 Would you say that the public knows enough

(a) To make good use of existing council services?

Yes	1	5
No	2	
D.K.	3	

(b) To get a balanced picture of the way the council conducts its affairs?

Yes	5	45
No	6	
D.K.	7	

(c) To vote in an informed way at local elections?

Yes	1	1
No	2	
D.K.	3	

(d) IF 'NO' TO (a) OR (b) OR (c): Do you think this is because the information is not available or because they are not interested?

Information not available	5	46
They are not interested	6	
D.K.	7	
Other (specify)	8	

47

Q 73 If you had to choose one thing which could be done to raise the level of public interest in local government activities, what would you say?

48

SURVEY OF EX-COUNCILLORS

Card
0

Councillor's Name

L.A.

--	--

8-
10LAA for which he is
being interviewed

Region

11

Interviewer

Size

12

Date of interview

Indiv.

13,
14

No. of calls made

G.L.C.

Reason for non-interview

1 15

Total time interview took

Interviewer No.

--	--

16-
18BEFORE MAKING APPOINTMENT ASK: Are you *now* a member of any other local council?

IF YES: DO NOT PROCEED

INTRODUCTION

I am from the Government Social Survey. We are carrying out a survey of local government councillors on behalf of the Sir John Maud Committee. As part of this survey, we are interviewing a number of ex-councillors, and you are one of those selected.

May I first ask a few factual questions about your past council service and personal background.

Q1 In which year did you first serve on the (LAA) council?.....:19....

19,
20

Q2 How long altogether were you on this council?.....years

21,
22

Q3 How old were you when you first served on this council?.....years

23,
24

Q4 When you first served on this council were you:

returned unopposed
opposed but elected
voted on as an alderman, chairman or mayor
or co-opted during the war?

1 25
2
3
4

		Card 0 cont.
Q5 At the election for your last term on the council were you:		
returned unopposed opposed but elected or voted on as an alderman, chairman or mayor?	1 2 3	26
		27
Q6 When you stopped being a councillor, was this because you were not re-elected, did you resign, or did you decline to stand?		
Not re-elected Resigned Declined to stand	1 2 3	28
a IF NOT RE-ELECTED: Are you on the whole glad about it, or would you have preferred to go on being a councillor?		
Glad not re-elected Would have preferred to go on	1 2	29
Why do you say that?		
		30
b IF DID NOT STAND OR RESIGNED: Why was that?		
		31
Q7 Are there any circumstances in which you would stand for the council again?		
Yes No	1 2	32
a IF YES: Which circumstances?		
		33
Q8 Are you at present still connected with the council in any way:		
(a) as a co-opted member of a committee(s)?	Yes No	1 2
(b) any other way? (specify)	Yes No	34
	1 2	35
		36
Q9 Besides what you may do now, would you if asked in the future help the work of the council in some other way?		
Yes No	1 2	37
IF YES: In what way?		
		38
<i>Remaining questions are parallel to those put to sitting councillors (SS369A)</i>		

APPENDIX 3

THE SAMPLES

Sample design

The purpose of our survey was to give a representative picture of councillors, and we have used three samples which interlock—the postal survey, and interview surveys of sitting and ex-councillors. We designed samples which correctly represented all the different types of councils and gave councillors an equal chance of being selected. The sample was drawn in two stages. The first ensured representative selection of authorities, and the second representative selection of councillors in these authorities.

For the first stage of the postal survey we took all local authority areas in England and Wales and grouped them into strata by type, i.e. counties, county boroughs, metropolitan boroughs, municipal boroughs or non-county boroughs, urban districts and rural districts. We further grouped these types by geographical region. We then ranked all local authorities in each stratum in descending size of electorate. We had to make sure that we had a reasonable number of each type of council and since there are many more urban districts than counties we used different sampling fractions for the different types. We took one in ten of all the urban districts but four out of ten counties. This process gave us a selected number (200) of local authorities, chosen with different weights. A list of these authorities is at the end of this appendix. We had then to move on to the next stage and select councillors from the chosen authorities.

For the second stage we obtained from the Town Clerks of all the selected authorities a complete list of their council members and their postal addresses. We arranged these names in alphabetical order of surname, putting the aldermen, if any, first and then the councillors. Mayors were included with aldermen or councillors according to their individual status. We wanted to end up with a sample of 10% of all councillors in England and Wales. Since we had used different sampling fractions in the first stage to choose our councils we had, in the second stage, to select our individual councillors in such a way as to compensate for the sampling fraction used at the first stage. For example, if the sampling fraction at the first stage was one in five, then the sampling fraction when selecting individuals, at the second stage, was one in two ($1/5 \times 1/2 = 1/10$ or 10%).

In rural districts where there are an overwhelming number of councillors in total we aimed at selecting 5% of all councillors. In all our statistical working the data in rural areas were weighted by 2, so that the results presented give the correct representation of all types of councillors.

The procedure followed is shown in detail in Table 'A'. It will be seen by comparing column 7 with column 9 that the percentage of our councillors who are members of different types of authority is very close to the proportion of all councillors in the country who are to be found in these types. The sample, then, was designed to represent all local authority councillors in the autumn and winter of 1964.

Appendix

TABLE A

Designed sample of councillors

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	INTERVIEW		
												Sampling fraction for councillors	No. of councillors selected	No. of councillors in these L.A.A.s
Counties	..	62	1/2·5	25	2,178	1/4	544	12·1	5,346	12·0	3/10	1/64		
C.B.s	..	83	1/2·5	33	1,945	1/4	487	10·8	5,056	11·3	3/10	1/46		
Met. B.s	..	28*	1/5	6	324	1/2	165	3·7	1,738	3·9	3/10	50		
Mun. B.s	..	318	1/10	32	825	1/1	825	18·4	8,445	18·9	1/10	81		
U.D.s	..	564	1/10	57	936	1/1	936	20·9	9,368	21·0	1/10	94		
R.D.s	..	474	1/10	47	1,540	1/2	764	34·1	14,633	32·8	3/20	115		
					200			3,721	100·0	44,586	100·0			650

* The City of London was excluded.

The L.C.C. and the Middlesex C.C. were included but not the new G.L.C.

For column 7 the number of R.D. councillors in column 6 has been multiplied by 2 because only 1/20 of rural councillors were selected. In all statistical work done in connection with the Survey, the rural councillor results were weighted by 2 in order to give them their correct weight. Column 7 represents the proportions of councillors in different types of councils which are represented in all the preceding tables.

For the *interview survey* a sample of the postal sample was approached. The sampling fractions used are shown in column 10 of Table 'A'. The interview sample is much smaller than the postal sample, and different sampling fractions were used to select councillors for the different council types from the postal sample. Consequently when preparing the interviews for analysis it was necessary to weight them to restore their correct proportions. The weights used were:

Counties	1
County Boroughs	1
Metropolitan Boroughs	1
Municipal Boroughs	3
Urban Districts	3
Rural Districts	4

For the *ex-councillors' survey*, we asked Town Clerks of the 200 local authority areas selected for the main councillors' survey to supply a list of all councillors and aldermen who had resigned or retired between 1st July, 1961, and 30th June, 1964, that is to say, who had voluntarily given up the work during that time. The list of names was intended to exclude councillors who had died or been defeated at the polls. One in six of all the names were selected for interview, giving a total of 207.

Response rates

However well a sample may be designed the results of the survey can only be as good as the actual response achieved. In the sections which follow an account is given of the response to the enquiries addressed to the samples of councillors and ex-councillors chosen in the ways described above.

Postal survey

The response to the postal survey is summarised in the following tables:

TABLE 'B'

			%
Usable schedules	.. .. .. .. ..	3,289	88·4
Response but no usable schedule:			
Refusal	.. .. .. .. ..	60	
Ill	.. .. .. .. ..	16	
Resigned	.. .. .. .. ..	7	
G.P.O. returned	.. .. .. .. ..	5	
Deceased	.. .. .. .. ..	4	
Only a few questions answered	.. .. .. .. ..	4	96
No response	.. .. .. .. ..	336	2·6
		3,721	9·2
			100·0

This may be considered a very good general response to our enquiries. Many details were sought in the postal questionnaire, which therefore placed somewhat of a burden on councillors. The success of the postal survey was probably due to two facts:

- (i) The position of councillors as public representatives and their interest in the enquiries of the Maud Committee.

Appendix

(ii) The follow-up procedure used by the Social Survey to ensure that forms were not overlooked.

TABLE 'C'

Type of Authority	No. of Clrs. in Sample	No. of Usable Schedules	Percentage Response in Each wave				Total % Response
			First ¹	Second ²	Third ³	Fourth ⁴	
Counties ..	544	470	27·6	36·4	17·3	5·1	86·4
County Boroughs ..	487	439	29·8	38·1	17·5	4·7	90·1
Metropolitan Boroughs ..	165	139	28·5	35·1	17·6	3·0	84·2
Municipal Boroughs ..	825	717	26·2	38·6	17·7	4·4	86·9
Urban Districts ..	936	843	23·1	41·5	21·7	3·8	90·1
Rural Districts ..	764	681	28·5	38·9	18·1	3·6	89·1
	3,721	3,289	26·7	38·8	18·7	4·2	88·4

¹ = responses during first week.

² = responses during second week which could have been influenced by first reminder.

³ = responses during third week plus 2 days which could have been influenced by second reminder.

⁴ = responses after 3 weeks and 2 days until close at 8 weeks.

Table 'C' shows that, if we had not persistently reminded councillors, we should have had a poorer response. The right-hand column shows that the response was very much the same from different types of councillors. The same even response was also obtained in different parts of the country.

TABLE 'D'

Standard Region	No. of Councillors in Sample	No. of Usable Schedules	Percentage Response
Northern ..	325	282	86·7
E. & W. Ridings ..	282	258	91·4
N. Midland ..	313	282	90·1
Eastern ..	300	265	88·3
London & S.E.* ..	540	466	86·3
Metropolitan Boroughs ..	165	139	84·2
Southern ..	241	223	92·6
S. Western ..	393	351	89·3
Wales ..	376	331	88·0
Midland ..	303	260	85·8
N. Western ..	483	432	89·4
	3,721	3,289	88·4

* Excluding Metropolitan Boroughs.

It seemed important to ensure that whilst the response rate was fairly even all over the country there were no special pockets where our sample might be deficient. Three further analyses were therefore made of response.

TABLE 'E'

Type of Authority	Population Size of Local Authority Area (thousands)	Relative Size	No. of Councillors in Sample	No. of Usable Schedules	Percentage Response
Counties	over 250	Large	384	335	87·2
	250 or under	Small	160	135	84·4
County Boroughs ..	over 100	Large	306	276	90·2
	100 or under	Small	181	163	90·1
Metropolitan Boroughs ..	over 100	Large	103	84	81·6
	100 or under	Small	62	55	88·7
Municipal Boroughs ..	over 20	Large	566	481	85·0
	20 or under	Small	259	236	91·1
Urban Districts ..	over 10	Large	600	548	91·3
	10 or under	Small	336	295	87·8
Rural Districts	over 20	Large	316	285	90·2
	20 or under	Small	448	396	88·4
			3,721	3,289	88·4
			All Large	2,275	88·4
			All Small	1,446	88·5

In Table 'E' we compare the response within different types of authority between large population and smaller population authorities. It will be seen that within every type of authority response is very much the same in large and smaller authorities.

TABLE 'F'

Type of Authority	Proportion of Electors to Councillors	No. of Councillors in Sample	No. of Usable Schedules	Percentage Response
Counties	Over 3,000 (Large)	271	232	85·6
	Under 3,000 (Small)	273	238	87·2
County Boroughs ..	Over 1,400 (Large)	244	213	87·3
	Under 1,400 (Small)	243	226	93·0
Metropolitan Boroughs ..	Over 1,200 (Large)	92	80	87·0
	Under 1,200 (Small)	73	59	80·8
Municipal Boroughs ..	Over 800 (Large)	428	364	83·0
	Under 800 (Small)	397	353	88·9
Urban Districts	Over 600 (Large)	462	426	92·2
	Under 600 (Small)	474	417	88·0
Rural Districts	Over 300 (Large)	405	362	89·4
	Under 300 (Small)	359	319	88·8
			3,721	3,289
			All Large	1,902
			All Small	1,819
				88·4
				88·5

Appendix

In Table 'F' we compare responses within the different types of authorities between those authorities which have a relatively large number of electors per councillor and those which have a relatively small number of electors per councillor. This table gives the largest single difference in response we find throughout our sample design. Whereas the response in the smaller county boroughs is 93% it goes down to 80·8% in the smaller metropolitan boroughs. Both these responses, however, are good.

TABLE 'G'

Type of Authority	Size of Council		No. of Councillors in Sample	No. of Usable Schedules	Percentage Response
Counties	90 or over	Large	282	244	86·5
	Under 90	Small	262	226	86·3
County Boroughs ..	64 or over	Large	245	221	90·2
	Under 64	Small	242	218	90·1
Metropolitan Boroughs	70 or over	Large	103	84	81·6
	Under 70	Small	62	55	88·7
Municipal Boroughs ..	32 or over	Large	368	316	85·9
	Under 32	Small	457	401	87·8
Urban Districts ..	17 or over	Large	487	433	88·9
	Under 17	Small	449	410	91·3
Rural Districts	37 or over	Large	387	351	90·7
	Under 37	Small	377	330	87·6
			3,721	3,289	88·4
		All Large	1,872	1,649	88·1
		All Small	1,849	1,640	88·7

In Table 'G' we compare the response within different types of authority of councils with large numbers of councillors and those with smaller numbers of councillors. Once again there is relatively little difference in response.

Table 'H' gives the distribution of councillors in different types of authority in different parts of the country. In the left-hand side of each column we give the distribution of councillors responding to our postal enquiry and in brackets we give the distribution of councillors as they are actually to be found throughout the country. It will be seen that we have managed to provide a good representation of all kinds of councillors. There are only one or two cells where discrepancies are to be noted. For example, our response gives us rather more councillors in the counties and county boroughs in the north-western region than the true proportions. On the other hand, we have somewhat fewer councillors in the counties and rural districts of the eastern region than we should have. But these discrepancies are relatively minor and in no way upset the general impression of a highly representative sample.

Our examination of response shows that we have an even level of co-operation at a high level, which has resulted in a sample very representative of all councillors.

TABLE 'H'
Comparison of respondents with all councillors by region by council type

Standard region	All councils	Counties	County boroughs	Metropolitan boroughs	Municipal boroughs	Urban districts	Rural districts
Northern	8.9 (8.5)	8.5 (8.6)	7.5 (9.6)	%	%	11.0 (9.6)	10.7 (10.6)
East and West Ridings	7.6	5.7 (7.4)	3.9 (3.9)	17.5 (15.0)		2.8 (5.7)	6.6 (5.8)
North Western	11.6	10.7 (8.3)	4.9 (4.9)	31.0 (27.1)		14.4 (13.4)	4.0 (4.5)
North Midlands	9.0	9.3 (12.6)	12.6 (12.5)	6.6 (6.5)		7.5 (5.6)	7.8 (8.8)
Midlands	8.0	8.7 (8.1)	8.1 (8.3)	9.6 (12.3)		8.2 (8.9)	7.5 (6.8)
Eastern	8.4	10.9 (10.4)	10.4 (14.0)	5.9 (5.3)		5.7 (7.7)	8.5 (9.7)
London and South Eastern	17.0	15.5 (14.7)	14.7 (12.1)	7.1 (6.9)	100	25.5 (25.9)	10.3 (15.1)
Southern	7.1	6.6 (7.0)	6.8 (7.0)	7.1 (6.2)		9.6 (7.9)	10.4 (5.9)
South Western	12.3	12.4 (12.4)	9.2 (11.1)	5.0 (7.0)		9.1 (11.5)	20.2 (18.3)
Wales	10.1	10.0 (4.70)	100 (5,346)	15.7 (5.056)	2.7 (4.1)	11.2 (7.9)	10.0 (9.9)
Total (Numbers)	100 (3,289)(44,586)	100 (4.70)	100 (5,346)	100 (1.738)	100 (1.39)	100 (8.445)	100 (9,368) (681)(14,633)

Note.—The percentages on the left of each column refer to our respondents—those in brackets to all councillors.

Appendix

Interview survey

The total response of the sample of 650 councillors and aldermen selected for interview was:

	%
Interviews	598
Refusals	38
Non-contacts (ill, no reply, abroad) .. .	13
Ineligible (resigned)	1
	<hr/>
	650
	<hr/>
	100-0
	<hr/>

The response rate by council type was as follows:

	No. of Councillors in Sample	Number of Interviews	Percentage Response
Counties	164	152	92-7
County Boroughs	146	134	91-8
Metropolitan Boroughs	50	46	92-0
Municipal Boroughs	81	72	88-9
Urban Districts	94	89	94-7
Rural Districts	115	105	91-3
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	650	598	92-0

The set sample of 650 was a sub-sample of the larger population of councillors (3,721) who were previously sent a postal schedule to fill in. The combined response to the two surveys was:

	%
Returned a completed postal schedule	573
Did not return a postal, but gave an interview	52
Gave neither postal nor interview:	88-2 } 8-0 }
Refusal	18
Non-contacts	5
Ineligible (resigned)	2
	<hr/>
	25
	<hr/>
	650
	<hr/>
	100-0

Twenty-seven of the 573 who returned a postal schedule did not give an interview (18 refusals, 9 non-contacts), and this net figure of 546, plus the 52 extra interviews, makes up the 598 above. Some information, either by way of a postal, an interview, or both, was thus obtained from 96.2% of the set sample.

Ex-Councillors' survey

Of the 207 ex-councillors selected in the sample, it was found during the interviewing process that 22 of the names given were in fact of councillors who, by our definition, were ineligible. The response was as follows:

		% of set sample	% of eligible ex-councillors
Interviews	156	75.4	84.3
Refusals	15	7.2	8.1
Non-Contacts (Deceased, ill, moved)	14	6.8	7.6
Ineligible	22	10.6	—
	207	100.0	100.0

The ineligible category is composed of 8 informants who were found to be still serving on another council and 14 informants who had unsuccessfully fought the last election. Since the sample of ex-councillors was intended to include only those councillors who had voluntarily withdrawn, no interviews were attempted with the ineligible councillors.

The response rate by council type was as follows:

	No. of Eligible Ex-Councillors in Sample	Number of Interviews	Percentage response
Counties	35	23	66
County Boroughs	45	42	93
Metropolitan Boroughs	15	14	93
Municipal Boroughs	28	27	96
Urban Districts	23	18	78
Rural Districts	39	32	82
	185	156	84

	% of Eligible Ex-Councillors
The final response rate was:	
Interviews obtained	156
Some information obtained	15
Refusals with no information obtained	5
Non-contacts (deceased, ill, moved) with no information obtained	9
	185
	100.0

By writing to Town Clerks of the appropriate councils information about age and occupational status was obtained for 15 of the ex-councillors with whom we were not able to obtain interviews.

The rather low response rate of 66% for counties relates to 12 non-respondents out of 35 in this section of the sample—of these 6 had died, 3 refused and 3 could not be contacted.

Sample of Local Authorities

Counties (25)

Berkshire	Merionethshire
Cardiganshire	Monmouthshire
Carmarthenshire	Norfolk
Cornwall	Nottinghamshire
Durham	Pembrokeshire
Ely, Isle of	Rutland
Gloucestershire	Suffolk East
Herefordshire	Surrey
Isle of Wight	Sussex, East
Lancashire	Yorkshire (N.R.)
Lincolnshire (Holland)	Yorkshire (W.R.)
Lincolnshire (Lindsey)	
London	Worcestershire

County Boroughs (33)

Barrow-in-Furness	Newport
Bath	Oxford
Bolton	Preston
Bournemouth	Rochdale
Brighton	Rotherham
Canterbury	St. Helens
Chester	Sheffield
Coventry	Smethwick
Derby	Southend
Dudley	South Shields
Gloucester	Stockport
Great Yarmouth	Sunderland
Grimsby	Wakefield
Hartlepool West	Wigan
Hastings	Wolverhampton
Hull	York
Liverpool	

Metropolitan Boroughs (6)

Deptford	Shoreditch
Kensington	Stepney
Paddington	Wandsworth

Municipal Boroughs (32)

Appleby	Kettering
Barking	Louth
Bebington	Ludlow
Bilston	Maldon
Blandford Forum	Pontefract
Buckingham	Ramsgate
Chingford	Rhonda
Conway	Rowley Regis
Cowbridge	Rye
Dagenham	St. Ives
Dartmouth	Swinton and Pendlebury
Farnworth	Tenby
Glossop	Tenterden
Harrow	Wimbledon
Henley Hempstead	Workington
High Wycombe	Yeovil

Urban Districts (57)

Abertillery	Knighton
Abram	Leek
Aireborough	Litherland
Arnold	Llangollen
Ashbourne	Longridge
Ashington	Mangotsfield
Bailldon	Market Harborough
Bakewell	Meltham
Blaenavon	Mynyddiswyn
Bletchley	Nantwich
Brandon and Byshottles	Narberth
Broadstairs and St. Peters	Newquay
Bude Stratton	Normanton
Burry Port	Orpington
Canvey Island	Oswaldthwistle
Cheadle and Gatley	Preesall
Cockermouth	Ripley
Coseley	Seaford
Crayford	Seaton
Cromer	Sittingbourne and Milton
Ellesmere	Staines
Ely	Stanley
Guisborough	Stone
Hadleigh	Tring
Hindley	Up-Holland
Holsworthy	Wantage
Horwich	Wellington
Hoyland Nether	Welwyn Garden City
Knaresborough	

Rural Districts (47)

Aberavon	Kingsclere and Whitchurch
Aled	Ledbury
Andover	Llandeilo
Bakewell	Martley
Bridgewater	Melford
Broadwoodwidger	Mitford and Launditch
Chailey	Northampton
Chard	Norton
Chepstow	Pershore
Chorley	Rhayader
Cirencester	Rothesbury
Crediton	Saffron Walden
Daventry	St. Albans
Derwent	S. E. Derbyshire
Dorchester	Stratford-on-Avon
Easthamptstead	Swaffham
Elham	Tadcaster
Ennerdale	Tarvin
Epping and Ongar	Torrington
Gainsborough	Truro
Guildford	Wath
Hexham	Whitby
Hitchin	Winslow
Ketton	

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